

THE
CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1845.

ADDRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE OF NEW YORK.

THAT which alarms the pope should, unquestionably, interest every Protestant. In the celebrated "Encyclical Letter of Gregory XVI.," issued May 16th, 1844, (and for a translation of which, with the original texts, the English public are indebted to Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Bart.,) there occurs the following paragraph, that, as a matter of history, needs to be elucidated, and not as a matter of history only, but as bespeaking the sympathies and prayers of British Protestants on behalf of this new enterprise of their American brethren:—

"From intelligence and documents lately received, we have ascertained that several persons of different sects met last year at New York, in America, and on the 12th of June, 1843, formed a new society entitled 'The Christian Alliance,' to be increased by new members from every nation, or by auxiliary societies, whose common design shall be to introduce religious liberty, or rather an insane desire of indifference in religion, among Romans and other Italians." After reciting some of the sentiments and proposals embodied in the following documents, "his holiness" proceeds to say—"As soon as this news reached us, we could not but be deeply pained at the consideration of the danger with which we learned that the sectaries menaced the security of our holy religion, not merely in places remote from this city, but even at the very centre of Catholic unity."

The curiosity of our readers will be naturally excited to know more of an association which has called forth this pontifical advertisement of its existence and proceedings.

Amongst the list of its officers will be found the names of the Rev. Drs. Beecher, Cox, Miller, Hawes, Skinner, Bacon, Dickinson, Breckenridge, and Adams, and the Rev. Messrs. Kirk, Cheever, Holmes, and others, who are well known to the British churches.

The Corresponding Secretaries, Rev. Leonard Bacon, D.D., Rev. Edwin Holt, and the Rev. G. B. Cheever, have published the following

ADDRESS.

FOR nearly twenty-five centuries, the destinies of a great portion of the world have been involved with those of the Italian peninsula. The empire which arose out of the victories of the Roman republic, which attained its height of grandeur under the Roman emperors, which decayed with the decay of ancient civilisation, and which fell under the successive assaults of barbarian hordes, emerging from northern Europe and from central Asia, did not perish when it fell. Unlike those ephemeral empires which suddenly appear in history, and pass away as suddenly, the Roman empire, with its centuries of growth and centuries of slow decay, had taken too deep a hold upon the destinies of the world, to be swept away by any external overthrow. The spirit of departed empire lingered around "the eternal city," and soon embodied itself in other forms. Though the eagles of conquest and of dominion had taken their flight from the Capitol and from the Palatine mount, Rome was still the world's metropolis; and from her seven hills there went forth over the nations of barbarian conquerors, an influence that tempered their ferocity, checked the power of secular tyrants, maintained the ascendancy of one learned language, and constrained all Europe, divided into so many nations and languages, to acknowledge a common authority and to look to a common centre. The bishops of Rome appropriated to themselves the vacant sovereignty of the world, and the pretended successors of St. Peter became the actual successors of Cæsar! Under the operation of the dominion which Rome thus established, placing the foot of her pontiffs on the necks of kings, and compelling them to execute with their secular power the decrees of her spiritual despotism, Christianity—the Christianity of the church as distinguished from that of the Bible, was robbed of that free spirit which it had in the beginning—the spirit which, recognising, in matters of faith and worship, the doctrine of every man's individual and direct responsibility to God, asserts the corresponding right of individual judgment and action, and proclaims to all who would stand between God and the conscience, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken to you more than to God, judge ye." Rome reigned over the domain of conscience, and princes were the executioners of her decrees; and when at length the nations of the earth revolted against Rome, and the empire of her pontiffs was rent by the Protestant Reformation, even then that inalienable birth-right of the soul, freedom of faith and worship, was but faintly asserted in Protestant countries, and governments claimed that command over the intercourse between the soul and its Maker, which had been exercised by Rome. It was only in a new world, over which the colossal shadow of Roman dominion never fell,

that the great idea of the complete exclusion of government from all jurisdiction over religious faith could be realised. This idea, completely developed in all its applications, and every where established as a supreme and irreversible law of society, is destined to give to Christianity the opportunity of reasserting its primitive simplicity and purity, and the primitive freedom and loftiness of its spirit.

At the present day, the destinies of a large part of the human race are dependent on the condition of Italy. The empire which the Roman pontiff holds in the world of thought and faith, is in the most intimate alliance, offensive and defensive, with systems of secular misgovernment. An intellectual and moral revolution in Italy, emancipating the minds of the masses there, and establishing the great principle of religious freedom in the conviction of the people, would speedily be felt wherever the see of Rome has influence. Let it become self-evident to the people of Italy, as it is to the people of America, that the State has nothing to do with the intercourse between man and God ; and that every man has a right to determine for himself, under his responsibility to God, what teacher he will accept to enlighten and to guide his soul, and with whom he will associate himself for worship and religious communion ; and ere long that great idea ascendent in the common mind, the idea of religious freedom, will work out for itself, by one process or another, under a merciful Providence, its practical developement. The prevalence of the doctrine of religious liberty among the Italians would change all things in Italy. Even within "the patrimony of St. Peter," it would kindle the light of true and spiritual worship amid the monuments and mummeries of superstition ; it would arrest the progress of desolation, by removing the most effectual of the causes that have paralysed the nerves of industry, and have spread blighting and decay over the face of nature itself ; and by awakening in the common mind the consciousness of a spiritual emancipation, it would impart a new impulse to every department of thought and enterprise. The bishop of Rome, instead of being dishonoured as the head of the worst-governed state in Christendom, would become simply the chief dignity of a great religious communion. That change would be felt throughout the world.

The common mind of Italy, it is believed, is gradually tending towards such a change. The abortive attempts at political revolution, which have occurred within the past twenty-five years, and which have been put down immediately by Austrian bayonets, have taught Italian patriotism one valuable lesson. The patriotic minds of that glorious land, whether in exile or on their native soil, are understood to have abandoned the hope of liberating their country by insurrection and the sword. They see that there can be no hope of a new Italy, otherwise than by an intellectual and moral revolution that shall make the people new. They see that nothing desirable can be accomplished without

the diffusion of new, quickening, and elevating ideas among the masses of their countrymen. They see that Italy will have all necessary freedom whenever the common people, the gay, unthinking peasantry of her villages, and the mechanics and shopkeepers of her towns, begin to become inquiring, thoughtful men : men accustomed to believe and act, not implicitly according to the dictation of others, but intelligently according to their own convictions. Many of them having been made acquainted, by years of exile, with what it is that constitutes the happiness of nations truly free, have become convinced that the great charter of such happiness is the Bible, and that the ideas which are to work out the true emancipation of their country, can never be awakened in the masses, but in connexion with the teachings of that book. With such views, movements are already organised by Italians themselves to diffuse among their countrymen such knowledge as will tend to that intellectual and moral renovation without which all political changes will be of little value.

The Christian Alliance, for the promotion of religious freedom, has originated in the attention which gentlemen of various Christian denominations, in the city of New York and elsewhere, have recently given to the present condition of Italy, and the relations between that country and the cause of religious freedom throughout the world. A door is open for the access of truth to the minds of the Italian people. Notwithstanding the most rigid censorship over the press and the importation of books ; notwithstanding every regulation which the genius of despotism can devise to shut out knowledge and to suppress inquiry ; notwithstanding the terrors of Austrian artillery and the inconveniences of a police swarming in every quarter ; it is ascertained that to some extent papers, tracts, books, the Bible itself, can be introduced into Italy, and can be placed in the hands of those who will hardly fail to read and to profit by the reading. At the same time an ample field of effort is presented among the Italians out of Italy, between whom and their countrymen at home there is, and, notwithstanding every possible regulation, there must continue to be, a constant intercourse. Even the slightest acquaintance with Italians in foreign countries shows that they are liberally disposed and ready to receive new ideas. From the Ionian Islands, from France, from Great Britain, and from other countries, Italians are continually returning to Italy ; and if, in the lands in which they sojourn for a season, their minds receive a quickening impulse, and they learn that "the Bible without a clasp" is the palladium of true liberty, they cannot but communicate to their countrymen around them something of the same impulse.

With reference to the field thus opened among the Italians, both in and out of Italy, the "Philo-Italian Society" was founded a few months ago, in the city of New York. The correspondence of that Society, and the consultations which it has held with friends of the cause in

other parts of the country, have resulted in some modification and enlargement of the plan ; and thus has arisen the organisation which now presents itself to the Christian public. Our great object is the promotion of religious freedom ; but still, as before, we propose to labour for that object, particularly and chiefly, by the diffusion of useful and religious knowledge among the Italians. It is upon Italy, with all its ancient and enduring influence upon the doctrines of the world, it is upon the metropolis of that great spiritual despotism which has for ages overshadowed the nations, that our eyes are fixed. Our prayer shall be, and our hope, that the great Babylon may fall ; and that the banner of primitive Christian truth and freedom may float over the Vatican itself.

In pursuing this object, we do not expect to intrude upon the appropriate operations of any existing benevolent institution. On the contrary, our labour will be chiefly that of inquirers and pioneers, seeking to bring into action, in the particular field of our efforts, the various systems of benevolent enterprise which we find already organised. If we find it in our power to arrange in Italy, or among the Italians elsewhere, an agency for the distribution of bibles, we shall call on the Bible Society to do that work. If we find openings for the distribution of such pamphlets and books in the Italian language as can be consistently published by the American Tract Society, or by any of the publishing boards of the several religious communities with which we are connected, we shall not fail to devolve that work upon those to whom it properly belongs. If we find opportunity for the employment of a living ministry, in the way of preaching the Gospel in the Italian language, there are institutions already in existence, on whose aid we shall rely, to send forth and sustain that living ministry. But, at the same time, there is much to be done, in our field and for our object, which cannot be brought within the scope of any existing institution other than our own. Inquiries are to be prosecuted ; facts are to be collected, collated, and given to the world ; agencies and correspondencies are to be established ; tracts and books are to be prepared and issued in Italian, and perhaps in other languages, setting forth in a clear light, for popular apprehension, the great argument for religious freedom. In these particular efforts we must be aided by contributions to our treasury. And in reference to such efforts as these, we ask for the co-operation of all whose judgment shall approve our undertaking as important, and as likely to be conducted in a right spirit, and with a suitable measure of sound discretion.

With questions properly political, our association has nothing to do. We do not undertake to persuade the people of Italy that their governments need reformation ; that a republic is happier than a monarchy ; or that an elective magistracy is better than a hereditary aristocracy. Whatever may be our judgment as individuals, whatever our sym-

pathies as American citizens, we are not political propagandists. We only assert the sacred right, the religious duty of every man to read the Scriptures for himself, and to worship God, not in blind submission to priests or potentates, but in the exercise of his own faculties, and according to his own convictions.

To us, it is an interesting feature of this enterprise, that it has brought together, in free and friendly consultation, and in hearty co-operation, Christians of various ecclesiastical connexions. We hope that our CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE will be another rallying point for that large and catholic feeling which dwells ever in hearts that love the Saviour. And while we invite our fellow-disciples, in all parts of the country, to unite with us, either singly, or in auxiliary organisations, and thus to aid us with their contributions and their personal influence; we would yet more earnestly solicit their continual prayers for us, and for "them that are at Rome also," making request, if by any means our enterprise may be prospered by the will of God, "that we may impart to them some spiritual gift;" and that thus the Gospel in which we rejoice, and which, as disciples of Christ, and members of his universal church, we hold forth to the world, "may have fruit among them also, even as among other Gentiles."

LEONARD BACON,

EDWIN HOLT,

GEORGE B. CHEEVER,

} *Corresponding
Secretaries.*

The *second* article of "The Constitution" states, "That the objects of the Society shall be to promote religious freedom, and to diffuse useful and religious knowledge among the natives of Italy, and other papal countries;" and the council solicit the pecuniary assistance of the Christian public in the following terms:—

The contributions of our friends are solicited in aid of the following specific efforts, which will be immediately attempted.

1. It is proposed to send to London, Paris, Lyons, Switzerland, Marseilles, Corsica, Malta, Corfu, Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria, Algiers, Barcelona, and other parts of Europe, resorted to by large bodies of Italians, a judicious agent to establish a correspondence and depositories for the sale of bibles, and other books, and to effect other arrangements for the religious and intellectual improvement of that interesting people.

2. It is also highly desirable that similar arrangements may be effected in Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, Rio Janeiro, the Gulf of Mexico, &c., where several thousands of Italians are to be found, destitute of all moral and religious information.

3. Funds are needed immediately for the preparation and publication of tracts and books in the Italian language; the History of the Reformation by Merle D'Aubigné should be translated into Italian

without delay. The materials in M'Crie's Memorials of the Reformation in Italy, may be put into an Italian dress, and published with great effect. The men are in this country, native Italians, men of taste, scholarship, patriotism, and enlightened piety, who may be employed on these and similar works.

4. The means are also wanting to bring before the American public the true state and condition of the various popish countries, and the character of popery as a system. A series of publications exhibiting the full development of the Christianity of tradition, will be the true "Tracts for the Times."

These facts unite with many others to prove that at the present moment the efforts of all evangelical Protestants should be directed to Catholic Europe and America, and their fervent prayers be offered to God, that He would enlighten, and sustain, and defend those extraordinary men, who have in various places been raised up to achieve a second Reformation. Nor are we without hope that the proposed "*Evangelical Alliance*" will be able most powerfully to second these efforts of our American brethren.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS RESPECTING CHRISTIAN UNION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

SIR,—Your kind insertion of my former letter encourages me to proceed. And—having, I trust, cleared the way, by laying down some general principles which cannot be gainsaid—I would now, as a Churchman, entreat the attention of my Dissenting brethren to some points, the due consideration of which will, I think, tend to remove some of the obstacles to Christian union and practical co-operation, between them and us.

First, then, I would request my Dissenting brethren to consider *our* position, that they may not expect too much from us. *We* are, in various respects, not so free to move as *they* are. Our position, as Churchmen, is a fixed position, which we feel that we cannot change without renouncing it altogether.

This arises from the very nature of the connexion between Church and State. I am not going to discuss the propriety of that connexion *here*,—it is neither the time nor the place. Our present concern is with things as they are; and I am speaking on behalf of those who conscientiously advocate that connexion, and hold the principle of an Establishment. So long as they do this, *they* must keep in remembrance that the church to which they belong has pledged itself to the state to teach certain doctrines, which are defined in our Articles, and set forth more at large in our Homilies—to maintain a certain form of discipline or church government—and to use certain formularies in

public worship, which are contained in our Book of Common Prayer. Here is, then, a compact between two parties, which is ratified and confirmed by Acts of Parliament on the one hand, and by solemn subscriptions and vows on the other. And I need scarcely add, that a compact (from its very nature) cannot be altered, in any of its terms, without the full consent of both parties. The position of the Church of England, therefore, remains unchanged; the clergy have no power to alter it, so long as those Acts of Parliament, which have reference to it, remain in force.

This fixed position has its advantages and its disadvantages,—like all things in human circumstances. One of the chief advantages is, *the stability of the doctrine of our church*. Old Thomas Rogers,*—the first, I believe, and the best expounder of our Articles—says well:

“The purpose of our church is best known by the doctrine which she doth profess; *the doctrine of the XXXIX Articles* established by Act of Parliament; *the Articles by the words whereby they are expressed*; and other purpose than the public doctrine doth minister, and other doctrine than in the said articles is contained, our church neither hath, nor holdeth; *and other sense they cannot yield, than their words do impart*. The words be the same, and none other, than earst and first they were. And, therefore, the sense the same, the Articles the same; the doctrine the same; and the purpose and intention of our church still one and the same.

“If, then, *the purpose be known by her doctrine and Articles, and the true sense by their very words*, needs must the purpose of our church be the same; because her doctrine and Articles, for number, words, syllables, and letters, and every way, be the very same.”

And elsewhere the same author says, on this subject:

“And being the same, the whole world is to know that the Church of England is not in religion changed, or variable like the moon; nor affecteth novelties, or new lessons; but holdeth stedfastly and considerably that truth, which by the martyrs, and other ministers in this last age of the world, hath been restored unto this kingdom; *and is grounded upon God's written word, the only foundation of our faith*.”

Nor should I omit what follows hereupon, as it refers to the spiritual unity of all the Reformed churches: a point which this author, throughout his book, labours to make evident (it being part of his design to prove that our Articles are “agreeable to the extant confessions of all the neighbour churches Christianly reformed,”) and which it is well to keep in remembrance in all our discussions on the subject of Christian Union.

“And being the same, all men again may see that we are still at unitie, both among ourselves at home, and *with the neighbour churches abroad in all matters of chiefest importance, and fundamental points of religion*, though our adversaries, the Papiasts, would faine beate the contrary into the common people's heads.”

* He appears, from the dedication of the second edition of his work on the Articles, dated 1607, to have been chaplain to Archbishop Bancroft. The first edition had been published twenty-two years before—that is to say, in 1585. It seems to have gone through many editions afterwards, and to have been a standard work.

It appears from these extracts, that the stability of doctrine in our church, was an object which our Reformers and the fathers of our church had much at heart; and which they hoped to secure, by means of that compact to which I have referred. And, though neither this, nor any other plan which the wit of man could devise, could prevent the decline of religion, or the unfaithfulness of ministers, (of which the history of *all* the Reformed churches affords such woeful examples,) nevertheless the importance of a fixed standard has been, I conceive, abundantly manifest; and has afforded immense advantages to faithful men, whom God, from time to time, has raised up, to maintain the doctrines of the Reformation; not only *within* the pale of the National Church, but also *without* it: for I need not tell you how often our Articles have been appealed to by excellent Nonconformists; nor how commonly, in the deeds of trust of Dissenting chapels, the *Doctrinal Articles of the Church of England* have been referred to as a standard. Whatever may have been, and still are, the errors and the unfaithfulness of individuals, and be the number of the faithful or unfaithful more or less, the *Doctrine of the Church of England* is still unchanged. Nor can it be altered, without entirely unsettling our present position, and the arrangement of a new compact altogether.

Such unsettling and new arrangement, the wise and faithful portion of the clergy would, I believe, dread above all things; and with the greatest reason—because they are anxious to maintain *the standard of doctrine*—they love the scriptural truth which is set forth in our Thirty-nine Articles: and, as it was only by a wonderful concurrence of circumstances—unparalleled in the past history of the church and of the world—that such full and ample confessions of scriptural truth were drawn up by the Reformed churches, and recognised and sanctioned by legal establishments in so many Protestant states and kingdoms; as it does not appear that there has ever since been any period, in which (were the compact dissolved, and everything to be done over again) either the ministers of our church would have drawn up, or our statesmen and legislature would have adopted and sanctioned, a series of articles containing so much scriptural and evangelical truth; and as there is no present prospect or hope (humanly speaking) that any new arrangement could be made, in which we should not lose infinitely more than we should gain; therefore, *for the truth's sake*, it appears to be our bounden duty to maintain our present position, with its fixed standard of truth, rather than, by attempting or advocating any change, to endanger or sacrifice the scriptural truth which we love. We are in the circumstances of an army, which has taken up its position, and is assailed by powerful enemies. The position may not be, in all respects, the best that could have been chosen: whether it be, or be not, is not the question; but

the army must keep it now, and make the best of it ; or give it up altogether, and be totally routed at once.

On the other hand, it must be allowed, that a fixed position (as such) has this disadvantage—that it leaves us not at liberty to adapt ourselves to new circumstances, as they arise ; or to move so far and freely in the direction of love and union, as some might wish us to do, and as many among ourselves might be quite willing to do. We are compelled to say to our brethren, “Come as near and close to us as you possibly can ; and we shall greatly rejoice in the approximation ; but we cannot come half-way to meet you. Our position is fixed by, what we consider, Providential circumstances, which we dare not disregard. Obedience to the Great Head of the church, the Captain of our salvation, requires us, we conceive, to maintain it, till He shall make it manifest, by unmistakeable indications, that the time is come for leaving it.”

Now, then, let our Dissenting brethren consider this our fixed position, and give us credit for those weighty reasons which induce us to maintain it. And let them remember, too, that, in many respects, in which *we* are bound by our peculiar position, *they* are entirely free ; and nothing prevents *them* from adapting themselves to changing times and circumstances. *They* are much more free to move in the direction of love and union, than *we* are. Their hands are not tied, their feet are not fettered, by a compact made two hundred years ago. Would it not be truly Christian in them, to consider the advantages of their position, as giving them full liberty to move in the direction of unity and love ? and to improve their advantages, by coming as near to their brethren as they can ?

I ask for no compromise of what they deem scriptural truth, or of any conscientious conviction. But I may ask them, for love and union's sake, to re-consider many points. To inquire, for example, how far many of their objections against the Church of England have any solid foundation in fact or Scripture ? Whether some of them may not be founded on mistake or prejudice ? Whether, in some cases, they may not have put an unfavourable construction upon expressions or usages which, when favourably considered, and with that kindness and candour which should find place among brethren, might be found to be perfectly consistent with great and important scriptural truths which we hold in common ? And here it should be remembered that sometimes expressions *torn out of their context*, may seem to have a very different sense from that which they will be found to bear, when duly considered in the connexion in which they stand. The word of God has a perfection and self-consistency, which are Divine ; yet, if we tear texts out of their connexion, and do not duly consider the scope and meaning of whole passages, we might make out contradictions in the Scriptures themselves. We all know, however,

that this would be *making out* contradictions, where there are none in reality. But if Scripture itself must be read and studied with a sober mind—avoiding all disposition to cavil—though it be God's own word and absolutely perfect,—can we suppose that the best of human writings could endure the severity of one who was watching to find fault, and ready to make a man an offender for a word? Surely a due consideration of that imperfection which cleaves to everything human, will lead us to make many candid allowances, and to exercise that charity which “thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” And does not that charity require, that we should be always ready to put the most favourable construction on the statements of our brethren; and to take them in a scriptural sense, if the words admit of it?

Then may it not fairly be questioned, Whether some objections are not, after all, matters of *taste*, rather than of *principle*? Our habits of thinking, feeling, and expressing ourselves, are different; and hence arise various likings and dislikings, which we may be disposed too much to cherish; but, in such matters, no principle is involved. We should, therefore, bear and forbear with one another; and not lay such stress upon them, as if conscience were concerned.

But even where conscience is indeed concerned, may there not be a postponement of some questions to a more proper season? and a subordination of the less to the greater?

We conscientiously differ as to the principle of an establishment. This is, I believe, allowed by all to be the main question at issue between us; and the most likely to occasion division. Can we, then, fairly expect either party to give it up altogether, and to bury the whole question in final oblivion? I am not disposed to ask so much, on the one hand; nor to yield it, on the other. But the enemy is at the gates. The saving truths of the everlasting Gospel are at stake: and myriads of immortal souls are passing daily into eternity unprepared. Under these circumstances, may there not be—without any compromise of principle—without any violence done to conscience—A TRUCE PROCLAIMED? Let not Christian brethren waste their time and strength, *under the circumstances of present peril*, in debating this question: but let us, with one consent, turn our arms against the common foe. Let our only contest, *for the present*, be that of brotherly emulation in preaching and maintaining our common faith:—who can preach most plainly, most earnestly, most scripturally and powerfully, the great fundamental truths of the Gospel, to the awakening and conversion of perishing sinners, to the edification and comfort of inquiring and anxious souls? Who can most manfully and scripturally oppose and refute infidelity and Popery? When we consider this vast metropolis, with its million of Sabbath-breakers; and the

teeming population of our manufacturing districts, and the heathen ignorance of large portions of our mining and agricultural population,—have we, or ought we to have, time, strength, or money to waste in mutual strife? Should we not first endeavour, by united efforts, if by the help and blessing of the Lord we may, to overtake, in some measure, the wants of the ignorant, careless, depraved multitudes around us, who are perishing for lack of knowledge?

No doubt the enemies of God and godliness would delight to see us employed in biting and devouring one another. The policy of the Church of Rome has been, *Divide and conquer*. The utmost craft of the Jesuits was exerted, from the foundation of that order, to blow the coals of strife among the Protestants,—to make and perpetuate divisions.* On the one hand, they were at work among the Puritans to magnify their objections against the Church of England, till every mote appeared a beam,—every imperfection a deadly and intolerable error. On the other, they were at work in the Church of England, to magnify the importance of ritual observances to the utmost, and to Romanise it as far as possible: and all this, to widen the breach, and to plunge us into worse than useless conflict with each other! Was it not mainly by the disputes and divisions of Protestants, that the progress of the Reformation was stopped?

We may expect that this truly diabolical craft will be again employed against us. *It can only be defeated by a holy determination to exercise mutual love*; by solemnly pledging ourselves to the Lord, and to each other, that, come what may, *as we are brethren*, we are resolved, by the grace of God, *to act as brethren*, both as to those things in which we are agreed, and as to those in which we yet differ! As to *the latter*, we will differ as brethren, and bear with one another in love, that we may cordially unite and act together in maintaining *the former*.

I have been obliged to write in more haste than I could have wished. Excuse this, and believe me, yours, &c.

A. S. THELWALL.

Cumming-Street, Pentonville, Nov. 17, 1845.

THE REV. J. JORDAN ON CHRISTIAN UNION.

[THE excellent vicar of Enstone, Oxfordshire, has requested us to insert the following letter which he has addressed to his brother clergyman, the Rev. A. S. Thelwall, in reference to his "Suggestions respecting Christian Union," which appeared in our last number, (p. 810): we cordially comply with his request, and commend it, with Mr. Thelwall's *second* paper, and Major Biddle's friendly rejoinder, to the candid and prayerful consideration of our readers.—Ed.]

* See a series of very able articles in the "Churchman's Review," from March to September, 1845, which ought to be re-published in a separate form.

TO THE REV. A. S. THELWALL.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is with extreme pleasure and sincere Christian satisfaction, that I have seen you acting out the principles of unity and fraternal intercourse amongst all the true disciples of the Lord, which so deeply interested and engaged us at Liverpool, in the letter you have addressed to the Editor of the Congregational Magazine. From my first perusal of it I felt an inclination to follow up so good an effort, by a few remarks which I thought might well succeed those you have made ; but having delayed awhile to accomplish what I designed, I have felt myself more than ever constrained to do so by some strange revelations that have since come before the Christian public.

It appears that in a periodical, entitled "the Oxford and Cambridge Review," originating in and proceeding from the two great Protestant Universities of England, professing moreover to follow in defence of the Church of England, a Roman Catholic student has been permitted to contribute more than one article, of which the *Patriot* boasts, as "admirable defences of the Jesuits," which "appear in a Protestant periodical and come out under Protestant sanction, as a Protestant vindication of the great order founded by St. Ignatius." But for this untimely vaunt, a combination or conspiracy as unseemly as that of professed Protestantism, employing disguised Romanism to assist in undermining the scriptural purity of the Church of England, might not have been discovered. No sooner, however, is the unrighteous union detected and exposed, than both parties secede from their assumed positions, and each endeavours to reflect upon the other for having drawn him into such an alliance. The Roman Catholic contributor assures the public that he was sought out, and his aid invited by the Protestant editor, while the latter replies that he never solicited from the former any article for his review. Where the truth lies between two such contradictory statements it is impossible to say ; nor have I anything further to observe respecting the matter, than to contrast this episode in the Tractarian *movement*, with the very different conduct and example you have offered to the Christian world, and consequently to point out the very different character of that *noble movement*, in which it was permitted us to take a part at Liverpool. In your communication to the editor of "the Congregational Magazine," there is nothing concealed and insidious. You aim not at any secret undermining of the church to which you belong, but rather believe that, by extending the right hand of fellowship to other Protestant communities, you are strengthening the general cause of Protestantism, and consequently of our own communion in particular. All this you do honestly, openly, and faithfully in the face of day, "before all Israel and before the sun." Your zeal is a work of light and truth, and you need not therefore darkness to enact it in. I mean not this in compliment to yourself individually, for I trust that you and I are

too deeply engaged in matters of higher importance, than merely thus to conciliate one another; but I design by this contrast to exhibit to the world the essential difference between those great antagonical principles, Protestantism and Anti-christianism. The first lives only in the light, while the second seems unable to endure the day: the one is open, candid, courting inquiry and examination; the other covert, insidious, acting with reserve and stealthiness; the former is bold, generous, and noble, daring all things for the sake of truth; the latter stoops to conquer, that when it has done so, it may rear its head in tyranny and thralldom over those it has by stratagem, rather than by heroism, subdued. But enough on this subject, which I will pursue no farther, preferring to turn to the more genial topics which your letter called up into my mind.

I propose to notice an element in the inquiry you are engaged with, which you did not directly touch upon. You have referred to the Bible as the infallible rule of faith, and have justly urged, that, if all men submitted to it more, there would be more of communion and fellowship in the world than there has hitherto been. This would unquestionably be the case, nor can the supremacy and sufficiency of the infallible word be too strongly, or too often enforced with this express object upon the minds of men. It is in itself a most safe, sure, and certain guide unto all truth. If this be so, how then is it that there are so many differences respecting *some things* in it, amongst those who hold the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture the most fully?—This question it is that is constantly thrown out by the opponents of the right of private judgment, as if it were one altogether unanswerable, and as if it were a stumbling-block in the way of those maintaining it, over which their adversaries rejoice to see them falling and splitting into various sections. Now the Romanist replies to the question in a very concise manner, for he denies the possibility of any understanding and interpreting the infallible rule of Scripture, except such as are themselves in some way or other gifted with infallibility to do so; and although it is the most difficult thing to learn from him where, or in whom, with any certainty this infallibility resides, whether centering in the pope, or appearing ever and anon in councils, or exercised by the priesthood, still he persists in claiming for his church, somewhere and somehow, the exercise of an authorised interpretation of Scripture, which insures him against all error in the comprehension or application of it. Not far, if at all, in the rear of the Romanist, is the Tractarian imitator of the same school; and others also there have been who have been equally ready to adopt the same notion, that the infallible word must have an infallible teacher.

And yet such a mode of getting rid of the difficulty, which themselves have created, seems in itself contradictory. Why should an infallible interpreter be more intelligible to mankind, than the infallible record

he is to interpret? The works of the Creator are remarkable for the extreme simplicity of their principles and elements, and in this simplicity their grandeur chiefly consists. Surely it would be, as undoubtedly it is, a much simpler process, and therefore more in accordance with the Divine mind, to give an infallible record intelligible to man, than to indite one which would require a perpetual succession of infallible interpreters to explain. It would seem that, either the record itself was originally useless, since the same power that was continually exerted to enable men to explain it, would be more simply applied in teaching them directly what to make known without it; or that, such a record having been given by God, it must be itself, as coming from him, quite as intelligible as any inspired men could subsequently make. In fact, the idea of the need of a succession of inspired men to explain the inspired word, is one of the most clumsy, unphilosophical, and irrational notions, that the weakness of man's imagination ever fancied.

How, then, are we to reconcile, account for, and explain the too obvious fact, that while the word of God continues, and must and will ever continue, as infallible and as safe a guide as ever, men fail to derive from it the fulness of this its special privilege? There is an element yet to be taken into consideration that has not hitherto been noticed. The being who has to exercise and use for his guidance this infallible word is himself fallible; and this consideration will both account for his own errors, and give occasion for much mutual forbearance, charity, and love, as all of like passions and failings ought to have the one for the other. The infallible word never fails, for, like its Giver, "it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" and though heaven and earth shall pass away, not one jot or tittle of the Scripture will fail until all be fulfilled. Fallible man fails in comprehending, receiving, and acting out the infallible rules of God, not from any deficiency in them, but from sin, that reigneth in himself; and thus unhappily it is, that the very thing it was designed to cure—namely, sin—becomes the cause of its not accomplishing the design of God; and in this, as in many other ways, the frailty of fallen man mars the gracious purposes and doings of the Almighty for his blessing and profit.

But, oh, how much ought this reflection to humble us, and teach us to remember whereof we are made, what spirit we are of! For if it is unhappily the fault of our common nature of sin, that occasions these differences amongst us, then ought we not to be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us? What a glorious scene did we see enacted in this spirit at Liverpool! Members of seventeen different communions there met together, and without a dissentient voice agreed broadly and fully with respect to all the great truths of salvation as taught in Scripture, those blessed truths that will endure and be the breath of our spiritual existence, when all else will have passed away. The basis there agreed upon looks

to my mind like a record for eternity, as the moment of its adoption, celebrated by the hymn of praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, will never, I trust, be effaced from my memory. In what was this glorious union founded?—In all the essentials of faith unto salvation. What does such a fact denote?—That those things are so plainly, so broadly, so palpably written in Scripture, that he that runneth may read them. In what, again, was there difference, to occasion seventeen different banners in the host?—In non-essentials, so to speak, that is, in things that, though in some sort needed and ordained, are not the things that will endure hereafter. What again does this denote?—That these things are not made in Scripture of the prime importance that others are, and that they, not having been so fully, strictly, and plainly taught therein, as the truths of eternity, there is allowed to mankind more liberty of judgment, and more freedom of action respecting them, than could consist with the things of the presence of God. But since the Almighty has not bound those things so strictly, as to leave no room for judgment, discretion, and discernment respecting them, let us not go beyond what he has done. While we claim and exercise our own liberty herein, preferring our own discipline and forms, let us allow the same to others. If we account their views in such things prejudices, let us remember that we have our prejudices, for that many of the differences of man arise out of the constitution of man's nature. "Man," says Paley, "is a bundle of habits, and it were easier to make a new man, than to mend the habits of an old one." One is brought up to the use of a liturgy, another to *extempore* prayer, yet each may pray according to his manner with the spirit and with the understanding; only let not the liturgist despise him that exerciseth *extempore* prayer, nor he on his part the other. One sees in the aristocratical model of church government, Episcopacy, what to his mind affords, when duly regulated, a more effective means of discipline than in the democratical form, the Presbyterian. Let each do as he is persuaded in his own mind. Let not the Episcopalian despise the Presbyterian, nor the Presbyterian the Episcopalian. If God confirm as he has done, the works of both with signs following, who art thou that repliest against God? Whatever may be the difference of administration, if the same Spirit worketh alike in all, let us beware how we resist him, or "kick against the pricks," since assuredly it will happen that we shall be "found striving even against God."

These, my dear Sir, are the views, I am persuaded, that animate you, or you could not have taken the step you have done, of yourself advancing and engaging in free intercourse and discussion in the periodicals of other denominations. Of this act I so entirely approve, that I desire thus to second you in it, believing that such a system of intercommunion and good fellowship will be highly beneficial to the cause in which we are engaged. I rejoice, too, that as an Episcopalian you have been forward

to make the advance, without waiting for an invitation to it. I believe that we Episcopalians have much occasion to do all that we can on our part to conciliate and win to union, (such union I mean as we have now embarked in,) all those who differ from us. I have long been of opinion, that if the same spirit which Bishop Jeremy Taylor has exhibited in his valuable work, "The Liberty of Prophesying," had been in his day and since adopted and exercised in our church, many of the divisions that we now regret might have been avoided, and I cannot but persuade myself that some of the most influential religious bodies now in existence within the realm, might have been so connected with the Establishment, as to have formed most useful auxiliaries of our church, and yet have maintained all the full exercise of their peculiar views and predilections. Unfortunately, however, the Established Church has constantly been used as a powerful state engine, and political bias has too often had influence, where "pure religion and undefiled" alone ought to have prevailed. The result has been to disserve and disconnect from the state church many who might have continued in communion and harmony with it. Who, however, shall doubt that the providence of God has permitted this for a season, in order to give occasion for the developement of a still more admirable mode of union, than a mere external and visible one? Those who now engage in that which has been so happily commenced at Liverpool, must, in doing so, learn to look upon all their own little prejudices and prepossessions as insignificant in comparison with those grand truths upon which the contemplated alliance is based. Each may retain still his own peculiarities, will conserve his full liberty of conscience, and will dwell under his own vine and fig-tree, no man making him afraid; but while each enjoys and allows to the other equal liberty of thought and action in *non-essentials*, all agree in upholding and conserving the *ESSENTIALS* of the truth. Thus will Protestants indeed become terrible as an army with banners; for while each regiment therein has its own colours inscribed with its own peculiar privileges, the royal standard of the written word waves over the whole host, unites them against the common foe, animates them with one hope, and combines them into one invincible phalanx under the command and conduct of the one Captain of their salvation.

I am, my dear Sir, with all Christian esteem,

Yours faithfully,

J. JORDAN.

Enstone, Oxon. Nov. 18, 1845.

MAJOR BIDDLE'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE LETTER OF
THE REV. A. S. THELWALL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

SIR,—No pious and catholic-minded person, I conceive, can fail to be gratified with the Rev. Mr. Thelwall's letter, which appeared in your last, from the truly excellent and Christian spirit in which it is penned. He seems, indeed, of a kindred spirit with his clerical brethren (of the Establishment) Noel, Bickersteth, Jordan, and some others. But much as there is to love and approve in that communication, there are one or two paragraphs towards the conclusion, that appear to me to involve no little error; the mischiefs of which will be the greater (if not corrected) from its coming from so respected and esteemed a quarter. Therefore, though I fear I shall hardly meet with your concurrence in some of my following remarks on those passages, I trust, Sir, you will consider it but fair and courteous to give them insertion in your pages, especially as I mean to be as brief as I can.

And first, as regards that clause where he seems to allude to the Tractarians. Is it right to speak of that party as so excelling in holiness? Is not the love of Christ the great incentive to holiness? and do they most love him who place his religion so much in externals?—in things that have, indeed, a show of will-worship and neglecting of the flesh; but disowned by the apostles as beggarly elements, and condemned by our Lord himself as doctrines and commandments of men? Some of them we cannot but hope are converted characters; but the greater part, beyond a doubt, the merest formalists; and are we to speak tenderly and respectfully of them, as a sect, who look down on all other Christian denominations, excepting the *Papists*, with the utmost contempt? Would Mr. Thelwall, because there have been some truly pious Roman Catholics, call it wrong to denounce Popery? and can we effectually or honestly oppose that, if we spare its younger sister, *Puseyism*?

In his next paragraph he clearly aims at the "Anti-State Church Association," the principle and design of which he (like so many other Churchmen) totally mistakes; and as his desire appears to be that all parties may better understand each other, I would very much like, respectfully, to put him right on this head. That body, as you, Sir, are well aware, (though you have strong objections to the movement,) does *not* denounce all the points on which Episcopalians differ from them, "as monstrous evils and abominations," nor seek to root them out. They only desire the greater purity and efficiency of the Episcopal church, by its separation from state patronage and state shackles

—especially as the former is in great measure at their expense; and both (they firmly believe) highly injurious to Christ's kingdom; a truth even admitted by many evangelical churchmen themselves. And can this be wrong? Let us reason from natural things; may I not sincerely and heartily love my brethren, and take all fit occasions to declare and manifest it; while at the same time, if I see him, at the beck of some inferior and usurped authority, associating with characters not approved by our Father, (though professedly engaged in his work,) and indulging in idle or hurtful practices, very much at my cost, too; is it improper or inconsistent in me to seek his reformation, and (if he will not himself amend) to take what steps I can to release him from the meshes he has entangled himself in, as well as save my own purse? Surely, if I did not, I should possess but little real affection for my brethren, or respect and honour for my Father—leaving out the duty I owed to myself. Such I take to be the principle—*parva componere magnis*—on which the opponents of the Established Church are acting; and on such grounds they should, and will strain every nerve to procure the severance of that unholy tie—the state and church connexion—which in this country stands more in the way of a hearty, general union of believers, of all denominations, than anything else existing. These were my own views of the movement under consideration, when I joined it, as I did immediately on its formation; and these, I am bold to say, are the sentiments of all the evangelical men who have at any time given in their adherence; while we yield to no men in sincere love for all, of every sect, who love the Lord Jesus. But we cannot but testify against corruption, and against injustice. The apostle says, "First pure, then peaceable." "We can do nothing against the truth." But I must conclude, and am,

Dear Sir, yours faithfully and respectfully,

THOMAS BIDDLE.

North Nibley, Vale of Berkeley, November 13, 1845.

P.S.—Your respected correspondent cannot have forgotten that one of the first resolutions agreed to at the interesting Liverpool meeting, (to which he alludes, as having been present,) was, "That no compromise of their own views, or sanction of those of others, on the points on which they differ, ought to be either required or expected on the part of any that concur in it; but all should be held as free as before to maintain and advocate their views," &c. &c. The party Mr. Thelwall complains of, would form no alliance on any other principle, and do not consider that union is, in the slightest degree, incompatible with their continued and vigorous opposition to the church as by law *established*. Not one of them, I feel assured, however, but can say, with myself, while we hate the system, we love the men; and it is in sincere and honest affection we would separate them from a connexion that can only do them harm.

T. B.

HOW SHOULD REASON TREAT THE BIBLE?

HERE is a book of extraordinary claims. It professes to have been given by Divine inspiration, and to teach men the knowledge of salvation. I find, too, that the most intelligent and virtuous people in the world have received it with reverence, and obeyed its precepts. I profess to be a rational being; how, as such, am I to act towards it?

In the first place, I feel that a book with such recommendations, demands my serious and candid examination of its credentials. Are its pretensions to Divinity well supported or not? I therefore inquire into its history—its penmen—its records of miracles—its predictions,—the accordance of its statements of facts with collateral and human records: having satisfied myself on the value of these things, I endeavour to ascertain if the book carry within itself evidence of inspiration. I examine into its discoveries, and find them such as the mind of man, unaided by God, could never have made;—I inquire into its doctrines, and admire their sublimity and agreement with both the Divine and human character, so far as they can be learned from other means of instruction. The morals of the Bible I perceive to be most pure, and the hopes, such as to meet the instinctive desires of a rational nature. The form and diction, too, are such as I am compelled to approve, as suited to a work of Divine origin. I am, in fact, convinced, both from external and from internal evidence, that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God.

Being satisfied on this important question, what next am I bound, as a rational creature, to do? If the Bible is Divine, it is of paramount authority, and I must, above all things, study its meaning. Reason instructs me, that, with such a revelation, my religion must be such as inspiration dictates, and not the creature of my own imagination. What then does the Bible direct me to believe?—what to do?—what to hope? If I obtain answers to these inquiries which, in some cases, oppose my passions and prejudices, nevertheless reason tells me, that I am not to bring God's word *down* to my preconceptions and carnal desires, but to allow my views and feelings to *rise up* to God's word. And as this is evidently a work of difficulty, and as my judgment is in danger of being injured by earthly affections, it is perfectly rational, that I should implore the aid of the Holy Spirit, so graciously promised, to guide me into all truth, and to enable me to will and to do that which God commands. If I can understand the reason of the doctrines and the facts of revelation, all the better; but when I find mystery, and am unable to see the full import of the doctrine, I must, notwithstanding, receive it as revealed, though its nature may be incomprehensible. When, therefore, I am taught the doctrines of the Holy Trinity in unity,—of the Divine and human nature in the person

of Christ,—of the influences of the Holy Spirit renewing and sanctifying the heart, and other truths which I can plainly see revealed *as reality*, but the modes of which are above, not contrary to, my powers of comprehension;* as a believer in the inspiration of the Bible, I am obliged to receive these statements as verities with all their legitimate consequences. I am “shut up unto the faith.” Reason says, if the captain calls in a pilot he must entrust him with the helm: and equally does she tell me, that I must either deny the authority of revelation altogether, or, allowing its Divine character, entrust the guidance of my religious faith and practice entirely to its direction.

So that both the Christian and the infidel reasons,—the one from good, the other from bad premises; the one from principles Divinely *established*, the other from the hypotheses of depraved humanity. The process which the believer employs is *INDUCTIVE*; the source of all his inferences is the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation. The unbeliever, on the other hand, reasons *à priori*; he assumes what ought to be principles, and thus, granting his own *data*, his own passions and prejudices are the premises of all his moral conclusions. The prodigal reasoned from his own data, when he preferred riot to filial domestic comfort; but his premises were those which paternal goodness had taught him, when his conclusion was, “I will arise and go to my father.” Both in the day of his folly, and in that “when he came to himself,” his reason was at work; in the former his premises were delusive,—in the latter, sound and faithful.

My duty, therefore, as a Christian, is not to desire the destruction of my reason, for that were to solicit idiocy; nor is it to deify reason,—for that were to depreciate the noblest endowment I possess; but I should seek, by all means, the sanctification of my rational powers, “the wisdom that cometh from above,” that I may understand the doctrines, perform the duties, and enjoy the privileges made known to man by that blessed Book, which *reason* assures me is and must be a *DIVINE REVELATION*.

Canterbury.

J. K. F.

* Were it asserted that three are one in the same sense in which they are three, or, that the Divine nature of Christ is his human nature, or, that the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies the heart without affecting and employing its powers;—this would be *contrary* to reason. This, however, is not the case. I can believe that I have a soul, although it is invisible; but I cannot believe that my body *is* my soul. The one involves mystery, the other contradiction.

MEMORABLE DAYS IN DECEMBER.

- Dec. 3, 1557. The Covenant of the "Lords of the Congregation" in Scotland.
- " 4, 1655. The Ministers of Worcestershire held a special meeting for humiliation and prayer, respecting the 'duty of catechising.'
- " 6, 1675. Dr. John Lightfoot died.
- " 7, 1529. Thomas Bilney recalled before Tonstall.
- " 8, 1691. Richard Baxter died.
- " 9, 1608. John Milton born.
- " 9, 1799. George Washington, first President of the United States, died.
- " 10, 1520. Luther burnt the Bull of condemnation issued against him by Pope Leo X.
- " 12, 1653. Dr. William Gouge the Puritan, died.
- " 13, 1417. Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, brought up before the Lords, and finally sentenced.
- " 15, 1811. Dr. Vanderkemp died.
- " 16, 1631. Robert Bolton, the Puritan, died.
- " 16, 1714. George Whitfield born.
- " 16, 1714. Samuel Walker, of Truro, born.
- " 18, 1555. Archdeacon Philpot burnt.
- " 18, 1557. Mrs. Lewis, of Mancetter, burnt at Lichfield.
- " 20, 1553. Day fixed by Mary's first Parliament, for the renunciation of the Reformed worship.
- " 20, 1675. John Howe's "Considerations before leaving Antrim."
- " 20, 1812. The island "Sabrina," one of the Azores, sunk in the ocean.
- " 22, 1557. John Rough, pastor of a Presbyterian church at Islington, burnt.
- " 25, 1541. Carlstadt died.
- " 25, 1674. Sir Matthew Hale died.
- " 25, 1758. James Hervey, Rector of Weston Favell, died.
- " 26, 1560. First General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.
- " 26, 1689. John Howe's remarkable dream.
- " 27, 1603. Thomas Cartwright, B.D. the Puritan leader, died.
- " 28, 1694. Queen Mary II. died.
- " 30, 1691. Honourable Robert Boyle died.
- " 31, 1384. John Wycliffe died.
- " 31, 1620. The Pilgrim Fathers first held public worship at Plymouth.
- " 31, 1690. Christian David born at Suetleben in Moravia.

THE earliest of those notices which, following the general method of previous papers, we first remark upon, is the appearance and last condemnation of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham. The circumstances attending the proceedings against this distinguished Wycliffite are placed in very different lights by different writers. Protestants are nearly all agreed that down to the time of his condemnation to be burned at the stake in 1413, his conduct was without reproach. Some writers have thought that there is just ground for the suspicion that after his escape from prison, he became implicated in the treasonable insurrection against the King's authority which broke out in Wales and elsewhere. Whether this was true or false, a bill of attainder passed against him in the Commons, and a price of a thousand marks was set

on his head, with a promise of perpetual exemption from taxes to any town which should secure him. He was at length taken, after a determined resistance, by Lord Powis, on whose estates he had for some time found an asylum. Having been sent by him to London, he was, on Tuesday, December 13, 1417, brought before the Lords, but refused to answer when his conviction before Arundel in 1413 was read to him. He was then sentenced to be hanged as a traitor and burnt as a heretic; on which he rendered thanks to God that he was counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake. At his death he showed great magnanimity and fortitude. When he arrived at the place of execution, the precise spot where St. Giles's in the Fields now stands, "he fell on his knees and with great devotion entreated God to pardon his enemies. Then standing up, he affectionately and seriously exhorted the multitude to follow the laws of God written in the Scriptures, and, amongst other admonitions, instructed them to beware of such teachers as they saw contrary to Christ in life and conversation." After this, 'while the friars who stood by, told the people not to pray for him, for he did not depart in the obedience of the pope,' he was suspended by chains round his waist over a large fire, singing the praises of God till death released him from his torture.

The writers on whose authority Lord Cobham has been represented as a traitor, are Walsingham and Fabian, of whom it would be impossible to say with truth that they were careful and unprejudiced writers. Their statements have, however, been relied upon by Hume and Gibbon; and Massingberd, in his *History of the English Reformation*, which is written in conformity with tractarian principles, speaks doubtfully upon the subject. By Foxe on the other hand, and all who have written on the Reformation in his spirit, Lord Cobham is regarded solely as a martyr to his religious convictions, on account of which he was indeed delivered over by Archbishop Arundel in 1413,—as the Lambeth record words it,—“to the secular power, to be burnt alive.” It must be owned that it is now impossible to ascertain the clear truth upon the question. We can only say that during his extraordinary trial before his ecclesiastical judges, his conduct and principles were such as entitle him to great admiration, and that it is not upon doubtful or interested evidence that his character should be depreciated. Le Bas, who by his position, is as remote as Massingberd from the temptation of distorting facts to raise the credit of the Lollards, and who in addition to all the means of information, possessed a judgment fully competent to deal with the details of moral evidence, has probably come as near the truth as any writer in the following honourable testimony in his life of Wycliffe:—

“But of all the noble persons who rendered the principles of Wycliffe honourable by their own faith and virtue, Lord Cobham is beyond all comparison the most

illustrious. It is probable that he was a hearer of Wycliffe himself, in his youth; most certainly he was a strenuous and consistent supporter of his opinions, which he intrepidly maintained, not only as a private individual, but in his place as a peer in Parliament. When he was finally brought to answer before the archbishop and clergy, at the house of the Dominican Friars, in London, he bore the following testimony to the excellence of his master's doctrine. 'As for that virtuous man, Wycliffe, whose judgment ye so highly disclaim, I shall say here of my part, both before God and man, that before I knew that despised doctrine of his, I never abstained from sin. But since I learned therein to fear my Lord God, it hath otherwise, I trust, been with me.' This magnanimous and inflexible confessor, abandoned by his sovereign, and hunted down by the fury of his persecutors, was at last consigned to martyrdom, and perished in the flames with the praises of God in his mouth, and the spirit of his Saviour in his heart."—*Le Bas' Life of Wycliffe*, pp. 403, 404.

The next memorable event we notice is Luther's burning of the Bull of condemnation. Some time before the date of this event it had become obvious to Luther that his only hope even of safety, much more success, rested on his striking a prompt and vigorous blow. He felt that he was irretrievably compromised with the pope and his many personal adversaries, through the audacity of his invective, and his fearless exposure of their iniquities. It only remained to concentrate and assure the large and growing party which had espoused his principles, by showing them his exact position and his determination to maintain it at all hazards. No other course was open to him. To declare war against the papacy was his sole resource, and he resolved to pass the Rubicon. Having, therefore, previously (Nov. 17) published an appeal from the sentence to a general council, and some other documents,

"On the 10th of December," says Dr. Waddington,* "at nine in the morning, he prepared a pile of wood in the public place at Wittenberg; and being attended, after due notice, by all the doctors of the university, by all the students and people, he caused it to be lighted. Then he took the Bull of Leo, together with the decrees, the decree-

* History of the Reformation, vol. i. pp. 287—289. We quote from this work in preference even to the picturesque and dramatic pages of Merle D'Aubigné, because in this as in many other places it is free from the exaggeration and effort of Dr. Merle, and better exemplifies the style and tone of history. In one statement, however, Dr. Waddington is less accurate than the distinguished foreigner. The burning of the Bull took place, as Merle D'Aubigné says, at 'the eastern gate, near the holy cross,' not 'in the public place' of the city, as stated in our extract. The true scene is represented in a most admirable picture of the event painted by Catel, which has been as skilfully engraved by Buckhorn. In this piece the gables of the Augustinian convent in which Luther dwelt, are shown peering up above the city walls just as they now appear. An ancient tree formerly marked the spot where the fire was kindled. This was destroyed by the French in the war of the revolution; and its place is now supplied by another, planted, if we rightly remember what we were told on the spot, in 1815.

tals, the Clementines and the Extravagants, the entire code of pontifical legislation, and, not disdaining to add to this assemblage the writings even of Eck and Emser, he cast them into the flames; at the same time exclaiming with his peculiarly clear and sonorous voice, and addressing the Bull, which was offered last, as it were the crown of the sacrifice, 'Because thou hast troubled and put to shame the Holy One of the Lord, so be thou troubled and consumed by the eternal fire of hell!'

"He immediately justified this act by a publication in censure of the books which he had burnt. He extracted from them thirty articles which he pronounced to be impious and anti-christian. Among them were the following:—

"That the successors of St. Peter are above that commandment which the apostle delivered to all men, to be subject to the temporal powers; that the pope is superior to councils, and can abrogate their decrees; that all authority resides in his person; that, though he should drag innumerable souls to hell, no one would have the right to reprove him; that God has given him sovereign power over all the kingdoms of the earth, and over the kingdom of heaven; that he is heir to the Roman empire; that he can depose kings, and absolve all oaths and vows; that he is the sole interpreter of Scripture; that he depends in no degree upon Scripture, but that Scripture on the other hand, derives all its authority, force and dignity from him.

* * * * *

"The Acts which contain the circumstances above described continue to relate that on the following day Luther resumed his lectures on the Psalms, and took occasion to warn his hearers of those papal statutes. It was little to have burnt them: the matter was to consume the whole papal see along with them. Then with much severity of countenance he affirmed:—'Unless you dissent with your whole heart from the papal kingdom, you cannot obtain salvation for your souls. The kingdom of the pope is so different from the kingdom of Christ and the life of a Christian, that it would be better to dwell in the desert in utter solitude than in that anti-Christian kingdom. Therefore, I warn every one who values his salvation to take heed, lest in conforming to the papacy he deny Christ. There is but this alternative: he who ministers to the church as it now is, without opposing its errors, risks his everlasting safety; he who opposes, risks his safety here. I, for my part, prefer this temporal risk to the account which I must render to God hereafter, should I hold my peace now. Having for some time cordially dissented from the excesses of Rome, I now abominate that Babylonian pestilence; and this will I proclaim to my brethren so long as I live. If I have not power to resist the universal destruction of souls, many of our countrymen may at least be preserved from eternal perdition. Let others take what course they will, it is high time for us at least to return to wisdom'—*Waddington*, vol. i. pp. 286, and following.

By such acts and in such terms did the intrepid Reformer join issue with the pope and all his hierarchy before the German nation and the world. Those who, as we do, regard this deadly quarrel at a distance, may be disposed to think that Luther did not always manifest the meek and humble spirit of a Christian in it. That he often railed when railing did not help his cause, or when if it helped it in some quarters it injured it as much in others, is most true. He himself lamented that he did so. But we are by no means in a condition to decide how much of vehemence, and even of audacity, was, humanly speaking, necessary to the cause he had in hand. Two facts, however, are most certain. His indignation against the papacy was

a righteous indignation : and it was the vigour, truth, and boldness of his denunciations which first united all the friends of liberty and evangelical religion in a confederated resistance to the might and tyranny of Rome.

Bilney, whose recantation of his evangelical convictions is recorded in our list, was a priest at Cambridge, where he was very useful to Latimer. The fact is related by Latimer himself in his own warm and homely manner, in his first sermon before the Duchess of Suffolk. "Master Bilney," says he, "or rather *Saint* Bilney, that suffered death for God's word's sake, the same Bilney was the instrument whereby God called me to knowledge. For I may thank him, next to God, for that knowledge I have in the word of God : for I was as obstinate a Papist as any was in England ; insomuch that when I should be made bachelor of divinity, my whole oration went against Philip Melancthon and against his opinions. Bilney heard me at that time, and perceived that I was zealous without knowledge, and came to me afterwards in my study and desired me for God's sake to hear his confession. I did so, and I learned more than afore in so many years. So from that time forward I began to smell the word of God, and forsake the school-doctors and such fooleries."

The various exercises of usefulness in which the two friends then engaged,—for they lived in works of mercy and charity, visiting prisoners, and relieving, as they were able, the temporal and spiritual wants of the afflicted together,—joined to their frequent retirement for spiritual communion to the outskirts of the town, where their reputed place of meeting bore, in Fuller's time, the name of Heretics'-hill, and especially the direct and faithful preaching of Latimer, before long marked them out as fit objects for punishment. They were accordingly apprehended in 1527 by Wolsey's direction, and brought before a court of divines and canonists, over which Tonstall presided. The greatest severity appears to have been shown to Bilney, as the reputed leader of the party. He was accordingly examined and threatened at different times by Wolsey, and afterwards Tonstall, till the latter prelate, hoping to shake his apparently settled resolution, produced his sentence of condemnation, the reading of which, however, he suspended in the middle, reserving the remainder *in terrorem*. Notwithstanding this, Bilney is reported to have remained faithful for some time, till on the 7th of December, 1529, he yielded to the entreaties of his friends and recanted. He was then made to drink the bitter cup of degradation. Remanded to prison till the cardinal should order his discharge, he first left in the habit of a penitent, leading a procession, bareheaded and with a faggot on his shoulder, to hear a sermon at Paul's Cross. After this he was set at liberty. The court having thus succeeded in compromising and disgracing the leader of the party, released the rest of them without proceeding to the same severities.

Bilney's fall, like Jewel's, and like Peter's, shows what the power of earthly terror, or of hope and terror rapidly alternating with each other, may be upon even a sincere and upright mind. His subsequent martyrdom shows too, like Peter's, that though overpowered at the first, he is not to be regarded as a hypocrite, and that when he had received strength he could glorify God in the flame. Clark has, in his *Lives*, given us a beautiful insight into the state of Bilney's mind when he was in prison. The following is from a letter, given by him, as one of several addressed to Tonstall. It details the circumstance of Bilney's conversion, and is one of the most natural and touching narratives we remember to have read.

"During his imprisonment he wrote to Tonstall, bishop of London, several letters, in one of which he says:—'These priests and friars are the physicians upon whom the woman, vexed twelve years with a bloody issue, spent all she had, and found no help, but was still worse and worse, till at last she came to Christ and was healed by him. Oh! the mighty power of the Most High! which I also, a miserable sinner, have often tasted and felt: whereas, before I had spent all that I had upon these ignorant physicians, so that I had little strength left in me, less money, and least wit and understanding: but at last I heard speak of Jesus, even then when the New Testament was translated by Erasmus, which, when I understood to be eloquently done, I bought it, being led thereto rather by the elegant Latin, than the word of God, (for at that time I knew not what it meant) and looking into it, by God's special providence, I met with those words of the apostle, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am the chief.' Oh, most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul! This one sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, did so exhilarate my heart, which before was wounded with the guilt of my sins, and almost in despair, that immediately I found marvellous comfort and quietness in my soul, so that my bruised bones did leap for joy. After this the Scripture began to be more sweet unto me than the honey and the honeycomb: whereby I learned that all my travails, fastings, watchings, redemption of masses and pardons, without faith in Christ, were but, as St. Augustine calls them, a hasty and swift running out of the right way, and as fig-leaves which could not cover Adam's nakedness. Neither could I ever obtain quietness and rest or be eased of the sharp stings and bitings of sins, till I was taught of God that lesson John iii. 14, 15, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' As soon as (according to the measure of grace given unto me by God) I began to taste and relish this heavenly lesson, which none can teach but God only, I desired the Lord to increase my faith; and, at last, desired nothing more than that I being so comforted by him, might be enabled by his Holy Spirit and grace from above, to teach the wicked his ways, which are all mercy and truth, that sinners might be converted to Him by me. I did with my whole power teach, that all men should first acknowledge their sins, and condemn them, and afterwards hunger and thirst for that righteousness which is by faith in Christ; for those things I have been attached, and am now cast into prison.'"—*Gillies' Hist. Coll.* vol. i. p. 81.

Two truths are powerfully suggested by this passage. The controversy of the Protestants with Rome, whatever might here and there

have been accidentally involved in it, was in its principles and its substance exactly what it now is,—a controversy for the Gospel of salvation. This is the first. The second—but second only in order of notice, not in importance—is, that the word of God is, without human explanation and enforcement—though these are often valuable too—quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Old honest Latimer, to whom we are indebted for the fact with which this notice of Bilney opened, has also left us an instructive description of his repentance and his restoration. He says, in a sermon preached in Lincolnshire :—

“When Mr. Bilney came again to Cambridge, for a whole year after he was in such an anguish and agony, that nothing did him good, neither eating nor drinking, nor any other communications of God’s word; for he thought that all the whole Scriptures were against him, and sounded to his condemnation. So that I many a time communed with him, (for I was familiarly acquainted with him;) but all things, whatsoever any man could allege to his comfort, seemed to him to make against him. Yet, for all that, afterwards he came again; God endued him with such strength and perfectness of faith, that he not only confessed his faith in the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but also suffered his body to be burned for that same Gospel’s sake, which we now preach in England.”

The form of worship established by the prohibitory act of Mary’s first parliament was that in use in the last year of Henry VIII. No other form was allowed. The same act, which was passed on the thirty-first of October, repealed all the statutes of King Edward’s reign relating to religion; decreed severe punishments against such as should interrupt the public service, abuse the holy sacraments, or break down altars, crucifixes, or crosses; and made it felony for any number of persons above twelve to assemble together with an intention to alter the religion established by law.

The covenant signed by the Lords of the Congregation in Scotland, and the first general assembly of Protestant ministers and elders in that country, are chiefly memorable on account of their bearing on the overthrow of the Romish doctrine and domination. The motives and conduct of the great mass of the nobility who favoured the Reformation were, as Knox himself complained, of a very mixed character. “Some,” says he, “were licentious; some had greedily gripped the possessions of the church; and others thought that they would not lose their part of Christ’s coat.” Neither has the history of the General Assembly been wanting in questionable principles and conduct. Fully organised Presbyterianism always has been a tyrannical system, and, *when established*, has exhibited by turns two of the worst phases of the hierarchical spirit,—a tendency to worldly formality, and a disposition to reduce civil government to a mere instrument of its own power.

It is professedly a *representative* system, and pretending to nationality, has, both in Scotland and England, claimed and exercised an authority inconsistent with the liberty of individual consciences. The evidences of this usurpation, not indistinctly rendered even by the sittings of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, have been furnished in well-nigh uninterrupted succession in the successive general assemblies of the church of Scotland; both parties in which, until the recent rupture, agreed in claiming the right to legislate for the whole church, and to force their own measures by the voice of a majority.

The meeting of the Worcestershire divines for humiliation and prayer, on account of their neglect of the work of catechising, not only led to immediate results of great importance to the people of their charge, but is also memorable as having furnished the occasion of one of Richard Baxter's most valuable works,—his "*Gildus Salvianus*," or "*The Reformed Pastor*." Baxter thus describes the circumstance in his preface to that work:—

"When the Lord had awakened his ministers in this country, and some neighbouring parts, to a sense of their duty in the work of catechising, and private instruction of all in their parishes that would not obstinately refuse their help, and when they had subscribed an agreement containing their resolutions for the future performance of it, they judged it unmeet to enter upon the work without a solemn humbling of their souls before the Lord, for their so long neglect of so great and necessary a duty; and therefore they agreed to meet together at Worcester, December 4, 1655, and then to join in such humiliation, and in earnest prayer to God for the pardon of our neglects, and for his special assistance in the work that we had undertaken, and for the success of it with the people whom we are engaged to instruct; at which time, among others, I was engaged by them to preach. In answer to their desires, I prepared the following discourse, which, though it proved longer than could be delivered in one or two sermons, yet I intended to have entered upon it at that time, and to have delivered that which was most pertinent to the occasion, and to have reserved the rest to another season. But before the meeting, by the increase of my ordinary pain and weakness, I was disabled from going thither; to recompense which unwilling omission, I easily yielded to the requests of divers of the brethren, forthwith to publish the things which I had prepared, that they might see that which they could not hear."*

Baxter appears to have always felt a special interest in this production of his pen. "When he published the treatise," observes Mr. Orme, "he expressed his confidence that the Divine blessing would attend it." At a later period, he says: "I have *very great cause to be thankful to God* for the success of that book, as hoping many thousand

* The whole title is, "*Gildus Salvianus, the Reformed Pastor*; showing the nature of the pastoral work; especially in private instruction and catechising; with an open confession of our too open sins. Prepared for a day of humiliation, kept at Worcester, December 4, 1655, by the ministers of that country, who subscribed the agreement for catechising and personal instruction at their entrance on that work."

souls are the better for it, in that *it prevailed with many ministers to set upon that work* [catechising, &c.] *which I there exhort them to.* Even from beyond the seas, I have had letters of request, to direct them how they might bring on that work, according as that book had convinced them that it was their duty." He adds, with some indignation, though evidently more in sorrow than in anger, at the state of things which the Restoration had brought in: "If God would but reprove the ministry, and set them on their duties zealously and faithfully, the people would certainly be reformed. All churches either rise or fall as the ministry doth rise or fall; not in riches and worldly grandeur, but in knowledge, zeal, and ability for the work. But since bishops were restored the book is useless, and that work not meddled with."

It must be candidly admitted that the system recommended and practised by Baxter could not, as a whole, be acted upon now. Mr. Orme justly remarks, that while he was at Kidderminster, "he enjoyed all the advantages both of the church and dissent. He was the minister of a voluntary congregation, and of a separated Christian society, meeting in the parochial edifice. He had all the consequence and influence of a clergyman, with all the privileges and independence of a dissenting minister. No clergyman dare now act in the same manner with Baxter, and no dissenting minister can do all that he did." With all this allowance, the truly devoted minister of every evangelical communion may work extensively in Baxter's spirit, and many do so. It is still true, however, that whatever faults there may be in other respects, the great deficiency in our own times is that lamented by Baxter as the sin of his: there is a general dearth of private instruction and catechising. How far this arises from the multitudinous and multifarious claims of modern society on his time and exertions, and how far from a careless indifference to his most important duty, it is for each individual minister to consider. There are cases where the will to occupy every portion of the field far outstrips the ability to do it, and there are cases in which the ability exceeds the will. It is not for one to judge another. Happy is that servant "who condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth."

The writer would not have allowed himself this seeming digression, but for the circumstance that the first week of December in this year, 1845, will probably, in cordial response to a recommendation of the recent meeting at Manchester, be observed as a season of humiliation and prayer by many of the Congregational churches. It may be agreeable to some of our brethren to devote the fourth day of the month to a special consideration of the subjects—catechising and private family instruction—on which, one hundred and ninety years before, Richard Baxter had been requested to address his brethren. Lay agency, as it is very improperly called, for there are no laics in

the Christian church, is a subject which has recently engaged attention—cannot such agency, or, to speak more correctly, cannot the assistance of private Christian brethren be more systematically employed in this direction? Cannot those who are qualified to visit and instruct the ignorant do more than they do in district visiting, expressly with the view to aid the pastors of the churches? Cannot the pastors and the churches look out for fitting men and press this work upon them, as a regular and necessary means of brotherly communion and edification? And can nothing more be done than is done, either in this way, or by pastors themselves, to restore a custom which the happy prevalence of Sunday-schools has almost obliterated within the memory of the present generation—the old nonconformist custom of pastoral weekly catechising? Richard Baxter has in his *Life*,—part i. pp. 179, 180, and see Orme, vol. ii. pp. 211, 212,—left a weighty testimony to the value of such efforts. In reference to catechising and personal instruction of the flock, he says: “Of all the works that ever I attempted, this brought me most comfort in the practice of it. . . . I found it so effectual, through the blessing of God, that few went away without some seeming humiliation, conviction, and purpose, and promise for a holy life. . . . Though the first time they came with fear and backwardness, after that they longed for their turn to come again. So that I hope God did good to many by it: and yet *this was not all the comfort I had in it.*”

Our list contains two notices relating to John Howe: the subject of the former of them—his *Considerations* before leaving Antrim—we must leave to the reader's curiosity. The *Considerations*, which do honour to his Christian conscientiousness, are given by Calamy, in his *Memoirs* of him, and also in the recent *Life* by the Rev. Henry Rogers. The subject of the second, though often printed, is too interesting to be here omitted. It is the remarkable passage written in Latin on the fly leaf of Howe's Bible, of which the following is a close translation:

“Dec. 26, '89. After that I had long and seriously reflected within myself, that besides a clear and undoubted assent to the objects of faith, a vivifying relish and savour of them were also necessary, that they might, with greater force and efficacy, penetrate into the innermost recesses of the heart, and so being there somewhat deeply fixed, might govern the life; and that otherwise no [true] conclusion or sound judgment could be arrived at respecting a man's secure relation towards God; and after I had in my preaching discoursed somewhat largely on 2 Cor. i. 12, [*“Our rejoicing is this—the testimony of our conscience,”* &c.] this very morning I awoke early from a most delightful dream of this kind: that is to say, a wonderful stream of celestial rays, proceeding from the lofty throne of the Divine Majesty, seemed to be poured into my open and panting bosom.

“—Frequently since that distinguished day have I, with a grateful mind, reflected on that memorable token of the Divine favour, and again and again have I enjoyed the sweetness of it.

“What, however, through the admirable lovingkindness of my God, and the most peaceful operation of the Holy Spirit, I was conscious of, of the same kind, on October

22, 1704, completely overcomes my best efforts to express it. I then experienced a truly delightful melting of heart, and wept for joy, because the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and by his Holy Spirit specially imparted to me for that end. Rom. v. 5."

It may surprise some that a man of Howe's vigorous intellect should attach so much importance to a pleasing dream, as to reflect on it at distant intervals as a memorable token of the Divine favour. We think that this surprise will disappear, if they consider on what account Howe valued it, and what, judging from his own memoranda on the subject, the benefit was which he derived from it. That the dream was perfectly natural, no one need deny; but this admission, as is justly observed by Mr. Rogers, (*Life of Howe*, pp. 497-8,) is not at all inconsistent with the conclusion that it might be designed as a token of the Divine favour. Howe unquestionably looked upon it as intended to supply what his previous meditations had caused him to regard as a necessary condition of vital godliness,—that is, such a quickening sense of spiritual things—"the objects of faith"—as would powerfully regulate the whole life, and thus decide the question respecting the reality of a professed believer's acceptance with God. That such a powerful and practically operative sense of spiritual things is a necessary condition of vital godliness, we presume none will deny. It is clearly impossible that, without a measure of it, vital godliness can exist. The only question then can be, What had the dream to do with such a sense of spiritual things? The reply is not difficult. It was, we have no doubt, in great measure the combined result of the spiritual meditations in which Howe had been engaged, and of the serene spirit which, in one of his transparent integrity of character, such contemplations would naturally produce; and it excited the feelings suitable to such a union of spiritual occupation and temperament in a concentrated form, and with a force resembling that which they will hereafter exert upon the disembodied spirit, detached from the allurements of a sensible and sensual world. Howe doubtless awoke in a holy and serene ecstasy—the power of which deeply impressed the memory long after the excitement of the dream had passed away, and which was to him a sensible assurance of the reality of spiritual satisfaction, compared with which the greatest enjoyments of the outward senses and of earth are but shadows.* It may also be inferred from the second paragraph of the preceding memoranda,—viewed in connexion with the reference to the *practical results* of the vivifying sense of spiritual things which the first paragraph embraces, that Howe had frequently ex-

* Had our limits permitted, we should have illustrated this point by the case noticed by Flavel, in his *Pneumatologia*, and in which he is believed to have described his own experience. This case is quoted in Gillies' *Historical Collections*, vol. i. p. 255.

perienced the *salutary* influence of that sense of spiritual things which his happy morning dream had so largely imparted, and of which his sanctified memory and feelings gave him an habitual after-taste. Of course we do not confound the dream with the vivifying sense of spiritual things which Howe desired and attained, or regard such a dream as an ordinary or indispensable method of obtaining it. The only point we are concerned to explain is, that Howe was clearly justified in the view he took of it. We should have added, that a pleasing dream respecting the spiritual world would not be to all men a sign of vital godliness, but it is unnecessary. No man can be justified in drawing Howe's inference from his dreams, who does not possess Howe's character, and exemplify as Howe did the subsequent power of his holy contemplations. But, indeed, no man whose life is not of the same kind as Howe's has a right to presume that his dreams are of the same kind. It was in perfect moral harmony that the man who had recorded this dream, as we have seen, should close his labours as an author by the publication of a discourse on "Patience in relation to the expectation of future blessedness;" and that within six months of his death, he should have his spiritual joys renewed in the way the preceding memorandum states. While on earth he could say, "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they who watch for the morning, yes, more than those who watch for the morning;" and he now reaps what he then sowed.

Of the worthies whose deaths are recorded in our list, some had a peaceful dismission, after an active and even troubled life spent in their Master's service; others were called to glorify him also by giving up their lives for his name. Our limits will not permit us to notice them in detail, and we shall therefore content ourselves with a few observations respecting Mrs. Lewis. In our notice of Saunders's martyrdom, (see page 109,) we said that we should have occasion afterwards to speak of one who was impressed by his constancy in death. The person so impressed was Mrs. Lewis. She was the wife of Mr. Thomas Lewis, a gentleman of Mancetter, near Atherstone, and a neighbour and friend of Mr. Glover, of the same place, who was burnt at Coventry, as noticed in our September number. Till she heard of Saunders's death, "she attended mass as others did," but from that time

"she began to think seriously on religion, and inquired earnestly of such as feared God, the cause of his death: and when she learned that it was because he refused to receive mass, she began to be troubled in her conscience respecting herself. And as her house was hard by Mr. John Glover's, [Robert Glover's brother,] . . . she did oftentimes resort to him, and desired him to show her the errors which were in the mass, and other things which at that time were urged as necessary to salvation."

From John Foxe's account, it appears that Mrs. Lewis, as "a gentlewoman born," and one "delicately brought up in the pleasures of the world," had taken "great delight in gay apparel, and such like foolish-

ness." John Glover therefore not only showed her that the mass, with all other popish inventions, was odious in the sight of God, but as a faithful monitor, "reproved her because she delighted so much in the vanities of this world." The word, however, fell like good seed into a prepared soil. She truly repented of her former vain life, and being convinced of the abominations of popery, she openly renounced them. The usual consequences followed: she was accused before the bishop, and condemned for heresy. Foxe has related various interesting particulars respecting her deportment in prison and at the stake.

"In the evening before the day of her suffering, two of the priests who resided in the Close at Lichfield, came to the under-sheriff's house where she lay, and sent word to her by the sheriff that they were come to hear her confession, for they should be sorry for her to die without absolution. To whom she sent word, that she *had made her confession* to Christ her Saviour, at whose hands she was sure to have forgiveness of her sins. As to the cause for which she should die, she had no reason to confess that, but rather to give God more humble praise, that he did count her worthy to suffer death for his word . . . All that night she was wonderfully cheerful and pleasant. She spent the time in prayer and in reading and talking with them who came to comfort her with the word of God."

About three o'clock in the morning she was troubled for a short season with doubts respecting her election to life, but obtained relief from Gal. ii. 20, and other suitable passages. At eight she was momentarily confounded by the sheriff's unexpectedly entering and abruptly telling her to prepare for death, as she had but an hour to live. She almost immediately revived, however, and said—"Mr. Sheriff, your message is welcome to me, and I thank my God that he will make me worthy to adventure my life in his cause." On her way to the place of suffering she prayed three several times that God would abolish the idolatrous mass and deliver the realm from popery. To these prayers many of the people said—Amen.

"When chained to the stake, she showed such a cheerfulness as passed all human understanding. Her countenance was ruddy, and her deportment so patient, that many lamented her fate, and, even with tears, did bewail the cruel tyranny of the papists. When the flames burnt around her she never moved, but only lifting up her hands towards heaven, quietly expired."

P.S.—The writer of these Notes on Memorable Days here terminates them with mingled feelings of regret and pleasure. He is pleased that his self-imposed task, to which it has been sometimes necessary to sacrifice a portion of his nightly rest, is done, and he is grateful to have been permitted to complete it without any disturbance of the regular and punctual sequence of the papers. Yet he terminates them with regret, for their preparation has been a labour of love. His desire is that the great Head of the church may bless them to the edification of those for whom they were designed. They were written with the hope that the readers of this magazine, and especially its younger

readers, might find in them materials for profitable meditation in the closet, and before the hour of prayer. These materials the writer has usually selected from the history of the church in its revivals and its conflicts. Many of them belong to the history of the Congregational body. All, it is hoped, have been treated in a catholic spirit. He may be permitted to mention again, that the "Outlines of a Private Calendar," prepared for the insertion and orderly review of such memoranda, are sold for the benefit of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.*

THE COLLEGE CONFERENCE PAPERS.

No. VI.

The importance of Examinations of Students at the end of their College Studies; and of Testimonials given thereon, and that this practice should be adopted by all the Colleges. By Dr. G. Payne.

THE point on which I have been requested to offer a few remarks, is, "the propriety of an agreement and common practice, among all our colleges, in respect to an examination of students at the end of their course, and of testimonials of character, learning, and other ministerial qualifications, to be thereupon given."

I believe that some such testimonials of character, &c. as are hinted at in the point presented for consideration, are given by most of our existing colleges—perhaps by all; at any rate, if requested, by the student, on his leaving the institution. It is well known, also, that it is the practice of our orthodox presbyterian brethren—I refer especially to Scotland—to institute some such examination as is here suggested into the qualifications of persons wishing to engage in the ministry, before they actually embark in it. I believe that in the Secession church, two examinations must be undergone before any young man can enter upon the pastoral office,—one at the termination of his course in the hall of theology, constituting him what is called a licentiate or probationer, and the second by the presbytery within the bounds of which he obtains a call to a pastoral charge.

I believe also, that (formerly at least) it was the practice in our own colleges to institute such an examination, and that the relics of the

* ADVERTISEMENT.—Outlines of a Private Calendar, designed to aid the cultivation of practical piety and closet devotion: with an Introduction explanatory of its use. Sold for the benefit of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, by Jackson and Walford, London, and may be had of all booksellers. Half-bound in calf, 2s.

custom may be found amongst us even now; the testimonials to character, &c. &c., which are at least frequently given, seem to imply the existence of such a custom; for how can testimonials be given without examination? I am aware, however, that our committees may give these testimonials merely on the report of the tutors.

Without dwelling longer upon past or existing customs, it may be well to go at once into an examination of the propriety of the measure suggested. It strikes me that the subject which claims our consideration, divides itself into two, or perhaps three parts;—the *propriety of granting* to our students, at the end of their collegiate course, *testimonials* as to character, qualifications, &c.—of *instituting* some kind of *examination*, with the view of testing those qualifications,—and the propriety of establishing one uniform custom on the part of our colleges, in this respect. The propriety of the latter evidently depends upon that of the two former. If it is not deemed to be expedient to give to our students such testimonials as have been referred to, and to institute the necessary previous examination, in order to the issuing of them, the question concerning the propriety of an agreement among the colleges cannot of course be raised, there being nothing to agree about, except, indeed, that there shall be no such examination and credentials. But if both should be deemed expedient, few will doubt the propriety of agreement among our colleges—both as to the establishment of the proposed plan of examination, and of giving credentials, and (as far as the circumstances of the different colleges admit of it) as to the kind and mode of examination to be instituted; and the nature of the credentials to be given. For in that case, the college that should refuse credentials founded on examination, or whose examination should be conducted in a more perfunctory, and of course, less satisfactory manner, than that of the rest, would place its qualified and worthy students in a comparatively disadvantageous position, when they go out among the churches, seeking for opportunities for glorifying God and securing the salvation of men. Other evils, which I cannot now stop to enumerate, would grow out of the want of uniformity of proceedings among the colleges. I shall say little more, then, if any, on the propriety of a uniform practice among the colleges, in reference to these points; but proceed to remark upon the two other points, viz., the examination and the testimonials, beginning with the latter, for reasons which will appear probably as I proceed.

Is it desirable, then, that our colleges should adopt the uniform system of giving, when it can be done with Christian fidelity, testimonials to our young brethren, of character, learning, and general qualifications for the ministerial work? I am aware that I have somewhat narrowed the question here, confining it to *approved* students, conferring upon them the right to require such testimonial, and laying an obligation upon the colleges to give it. It may, I am aware, be

asked, "Should not the body empowered to issue such testimonial state, in all cases, at the termination of the young brother's course, their opinion of his character and general qualifications, though it should not be very favourable?" I have thought that the want of such testimonials would secure all the practical purposes aimed at, and that, in most cases, the young brother himself would prefer this mode of proceeding. Still I should say, that if a testimonial, such as can be given, be required, let it be granted.*

In reference to the propriety of adopting universally the system of giving testimonials, I cannot well anticipate a difference of opinion. It appears to me, that the collegiate body, to whom the churches have entrusted funds to aid them in the sacred work of preparing young brethren for the work of the ministry, are bound, in *justice to those churches*, to afford them some means of ascertaining in what cases their efforts have, with the Divine blessing, been successful. What less objectionable plan—a plan more quiet and unostentatious—less adapted to produce inflation on the one hand, and depression on the other,—can be devised than the one in question? Again, *justice to the young brethren* themselves requires that such testimonials should be granted to them. When they have studied, during their collegiate life, (which should be rather more regarded as a period for the trial of character than it is at present) to show themselves approved of God, to be blameless, not self-willed, not soon angry, but gentle to all men—when they have developed the requisite mental power, and, by the blessing of God upon a course of prayerful and laborious exertion have become, as far as ought to be expected, scribes, well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom, faithful men, able and apt to teach others also, are they not entitled to go forth among the churches with the imprimatur of the college from which they emanate?

I am anxious to assert the rights of my young brethren. A college life subjects those who pass through it to a severe intellectual and moral test; when our young friends come out of the crucible as "gold seven times purified," they are entitled surely to receive from their "*alma mater*" all the benefit which may be derived from its attestation of the gratifying fact.

But especially does *justice to the churches to which our young brethren may be introduced*, require a general concurrence of the colleges in giving such testimonials. The simple fact, when known, that a young minister has passed through a regular course of instruction at one of our colleges, is *primâ facie* evidence in his favour. It is

* And, if the practice of granting approving testimonials, whenever deserved, were to become universal, the want of such testimonial would be a sufficient indication to destitute churches, that they ought to institute inquiry, and would indeed render them inexcusable if they did not.

regarded, generally so at least, by destitute churches, as furnishing satisfactory proof that he possesses all requisite ministerial qualifications. Possibly this ought to be so. I shall not deny, though I do not assert, that, where such doubts, either of the mental stamina, or of the intellectual habits, or the mental furniture of a young brother, become so decided as to justify the refusal of the proposed testimonials, they ought to lead to measures having in view his withdrawal from the college. It will be said by some, that those whom the college authorities cannot recommend, they should not retain. It is manifest, however, that some cases may occur where, though doubt, and serious doubt, may exist, it may yet not be sufficiently decided and strong to justify the extreme measure of expulsion, or even a request to withdraw. Or, if it be, it may not have become so till near the close of the collegiate course; the examination, indeed, may fully confirm the doubt. What is the college committee to do in such cases? They dare not, at least I hope they will not, assume infallibility. They will be disposed to say, "We may be mistaken in our estimate of our young brother. Cases have existed, perhaps not unfrequently, in which the college life has put forth few blossoms, while in after periods, there has been satisfactory, if not abundant fruit." They will be likely to add, "we cannot do anything to extinguish what may hereafter possibly prove to be a useful, if not a burning and shining light." In such a case, (I mean now a case of doubt confirmed by the closing examination,) the college would withhold its imprimatur. Though Christian charity, which frowns upon anything approaching to severity, might prevent a testimony *against* the young brother, (I assume of course that character is unimpeachable,) Christian fidelity would equally prevent a *testimonial in his favour*, and he would go forth among the churches simply not recommended by the body from whom the testimonial should emanate. I cannot but think our destitute congregations are entitled to demand from us some such measure of protection. Fidelity to them requires it, and kindness to our young brethren does not forbid it. It would prove, on the contrary, an advantage to our holy, devoted, laborious, active, successful students; and I would not withhold from them a benefit, lest the bestowment of it might prove injurious to others of an opposite character.

Your time prevents more being said on this part of the subject. The first question—viz., whether such testimonials should be given—I answer in the affirmative.

The second question regards the propriety of instituting some kind of examination at the termination of the course of study, with a view to decide whether any, or what, testimonials shall be given. To this question—stated very generally, as I have designedly stated it—there is little doubt that an affirmative reply should be given. In fact, unless the proposed testimonial is to emanate from the tutors exclu-

sively, without a word of inquiry from any other party, some examination there must be. Now, being a tutor myself, I am more free than I might otherwise be to say, I cannot think that such a testimonial ought to be deemed satisfactory by the churches. They have a right to require more.

The question then is, "What more?" I answer the question by saying, that at least there should be a thorough examination by the committee in reference to all the points specified in the fifth head of consideration. I am not sure that I know the existing practice in our colleges, but I am disposed to think that the examination should be of a more formal and solemn character than perhaps usually prevails—that the committee should go into a review, as far as their own knowledge and the record of their proceedings will enable them to do it, of the general spirit and conduct of the student about to leave; his habits of order, regularity, attention, &c.; his powers of application and acquisition; his ardour in the prosecution of his studies, and the amount of fruit he has reaped; his temper, prudence, knowledge of our ecclesiastical proceedings; power of governing men; his aptness to teach, voice, manner, &c.;—that the committee, or others, should go into a general review of all these points, taking the opinion, of course, of the tutors, and, by requiring an unbiased judgment, constraining them to rise above those feelings of delicacy, which might possibly operate to draw forth a more favourable verdict, than the justice of the case demanded.

Such an examination as has been now suggested, though not requiring the personal appearance of the young brother, excepting in certain supposable cases, would prove, I think, of immense benefit. The prospect of being subjected to it, especially if conducted with blended Christian fidelity and tenderness, would prove a moral guard against many of the temptations to which our young brethren are exposed, of the most powerful kind. But it is not the only examination I am disposed to recommend. That of which I have as yet spoken, would be mainly adapted to enable the examining body to issue testimonials respecting the moral and religious character and attainments of our young brethren; those qualities of the mind and heart, which uniform experience has shown to be so essential to success in the ministry. In addition to this, I incline to think there should be another, designed to test their proficiency in those departments of literature and science through which their course of study has conducted them; and pre-eminently their biblical and theological attainments. The adoption of this, as a general measure, could not fail, I think, to be greatly beneficial. The prospect of having to undergo such an examination, and the thought, pressing upon the mind of our young brethren throughout the whole of their academic life, that the character with which they shall enter at length upon the

field of enterprise, must greatly depend on its result, would form a much-needed stimulus—I think, an effectual stimulus—to undying industry and mental effort; and thus habits, both moral and intellectual, would be gained and confirmed, far more precious to our students themselves, and to the churches which are to form the scenes of their labour, than any amount of knowledge, how great soever it may be, that has been gained during their period of study. I have said the prospect of such examination would prove an *effectual* stimulus. I will only add, that in a case in which it failed to do this, it would become tolerably manifest that the individual did not afford sufficient promise of usefulness in the church to justify the issuing of the customary testimonials.

But how should the examination be conducted? It might be conducted by the committee themselves; either by members of their own body, or by the tutors in presence of the committee; or, where this is practicable by another, and foreign body, at the appointment and request of the committee. The latter would, perhaps, be generally thought to be the fairest, the most impartial and satisfactory mode of proceeding; and yet it may be doubted whether tutors who are in the constant, perhaps daily, habit of examination, and who have acquired an expertness, not to be attained perhaps without considerable practice, in opening to public view the talents and attainments of the young brethren subjected to the examination, would not succeed better than comparative strangers. Somewhat would depend upon the form of the examination, whether *viva voce*, (to which I incline) or by written papers. The statements in this paper assume the examination to be the former, and are adjusted to that assumption; but every committee would adopt its own plan. Nothing more is intended to be urged than a *bona fide* examination.

An important question it is, Whether any, and if so, what, notice should be given to the students of the course which the examiners intend to take; the great subjects, or parts of the subjects, on which the examination will mainly turn. One thing is perfectly manifest—that it should be a fair examination; an examination adapted to ascertain and exhibit the amount of knowledge possessed, and of facility in the communication of it to others: which I hold it to be equally manifest it cannot be if it be conducted by questions previously prepared and given to the students, unless those questions be exceedingly numerous and multifarious, and a selection be made by the examiners *ad libitum*.

I incline to think our young brethren should be apprised, a short time before the examination, of the general course over which it is the intention of the examiners to pass. This would, perhaps, be a sufficiently rigid test of the proficiency of the students; and it would tend also to put upon an equality with others those, who, with equal stores

of information, perhaps even greater, have not an equal facility of producing them on the instant, especially if shrinking, and retiring, and appalled, as they must in some measure be, at the prospect of a trial on which they know such important consequences depend.

Taking these last points into account—the difference of constitutional temperament among students, and the superior facility of some in bringing out for instant use the stores of knowledge laid up in their minds—I incline to think that the testimonial, to which we have referred, should not directly emanate from the examining body when that body is other than the committee, but from the committee itself, who, receiving a report from the examiners, will frame the testimonial they give by the combined light of that report, and of the knowledge they have themselves acquired of the general character, habits, and attainments of their young brethren.

No. VII.

The Consideration of some Plans to assist Pastors, (and I would add, Churches,) in deciding whether to encourage the first proposals made for entering the Ministry by our younger Brethren; and to secure a more extended and effectual testing of their Qualifications, previous to their appearance before the Committees of the Colleges as Candidates for admission. By the Rev. Walter Scott.

I CAN truly say, I am sorry that the writing of a paper on this important topic has devolved on me, both because, whatever experience I have had in the introduction of young men to the pastoral office, I am sure that there are many of those whom I am now addressing who are better qualified than I am to do justice to the subject under consideration; and because I do not think that the evil, to which, by implication, it refers, has prevailed to so great an extent as some appear to imagine; neither, perhaps, do I entertain so sanguine a hope of success in the proposed attempt to remove it, as some of my brethren seem to do: consequently my views respecting the remedy may differ from theirs. It is only deference to their wishes and appointment, and a desire to assist, as far as I can, in promoting the important object of the present meeting, that have induced me to offer a few thoughts on the subject that has just been specified.

It is to the honour of Independents that they have ever been deeply sensible of the vast importance of genuine, and even superior piety in the ministers of the Gospel, and have made more vigorous and systematic efforts to secure this essential qualification, than, as far as I know, any other section of the professed followers of Jesus Christ have,

with the exception of the Methodists. It would not be correct to assert that they have held it in too high estimation, for this is scarcely possible: but there have been not a few amongst them who have attached too little importance to some other things; who have disparaged natural talent, and learning, and mental cultivation, and study, and have expected the influence of the Divine Spirit in a way and to an extent which are not warranted by the representations of the word of God. They have, however, been right in requiring credible evidences of conversion, of the possession of the faculty of spiritual perception, and of real consecration to God, in those whom they have encouraged to undertake the Gospel ministry, as prime qualifications for that office. An unconverted ministry will be the bane of any religious society; and will certainly neutralise any other excellences or efficient instrumentalities that it may possess. If piety is in a low state in the ministry, it will never flourish in the church. We might just as well expect that the human frame will be in health, if the head is sick, or the heart faint; for the Gospel ministry is Divinely appointed for the nourishment and growth of the body of Christ. But those have acted most wisely, who have required, in addition to piety, as much of mental ability, and cultivation, and solid learning, as could be secured, in the ministers of the Gospel; for the more of these that eminent piety has at its command, the more extensive will be its salutary influence, and therefore the more efficient its operations. And however talent and learning may be abused, or found in a state of complete separation from moral excellence, we should be chargeable with slandering both it and them, were we to say that they are inimical to each other. There is rather a natural affinity betwixt them, however they may be divorced by sin, which is, as far as it prevails, the destroyer of order, and the perverter of union throughout the whole creation of God. Since religion is incontrovertibly a rational and a reasonable service, the greater the extent to which the powers of reason are possessed, the more natural, in one sense, religion must be; for as piety consists in the supreme love of infinite excellence, the greater the ability which any man possesses, in consequence of native talent and mental cultivation, to understand the works and the word of God, and the manifestations which he has given of his attributes,—with the greater intensity may the flame of rational devotion burn in his breast.

All, I apprehend, who have seriously considered the subject will acknowledge that, in many cases, it is far from being easy to form a correct judgment respecting the qualifications of candidates for the Christian ministry. The precious gold of piety and talent is presented in its native state, unwrought and unpolished, and mixed with more or less of dross, so that it is difficult to ascertain either its amount or its quality. A judgment must be formed, in some degree, of the fruit

from the blossom, and of the full crop from the blade just appearing above ground; no wonder, then, that anticipations are frequently not realised. The most solid piety and talent are not always the most showy: confidence and liveliness of temperament may be mistaken for mental ability; and timidity and modesty, or untutored awkwardness and inaptitude, for dulness and incapacity; and yet the former may be connected with inferior, and the latter with superior mental powers. The one may be the gravity and quietude of the perched eagle, which can, whenever it pleases, soar to the skies; and the other, the pertness and activity of the sparrow, whose highest flight is to the house-top. Previous advantages of education, desirable as they are, may conceal native deficiency, and leave little room for future progress. Too much importance may be attached to some real, or supposed, natural disqualifications, as it regards voice, or manners, or bodily health. Demosthenes might have been rejected on account of his stammering, and Cicero because of his weakness of voice, or hurried pronunciation; and Doddridge, or Watts, because of the feebleness of his frame. Facts prove that some who have been at first repulsed, have been afterwards received, and have proved acceptable and useful; in some cases, eminently successful; and that others, who were highly promising, have disappointed the hopes which they had raised. Formidable obstacles may be surmounted, and great deficiencies supplied, by diligence and perseverance; and shining talents may be neutralised by negligence and sloth, so that it is difficult to prognosticate the future from the present. Sanguine and apparently well-founded hopes have been disappointed in some cases, and the expectations that were formed, far exceeded in others. Some of the most lamentable cases of failure have occurred in the case of those who, at the commencement of their course, seemed to be furnished with the most satisfactory credentials, as it regarded both piety and ability; their future course it was impossible for human sagacity to foresee, and, therefore, the occasional entrance of such into the ministry can never, I apprehend, be prevented. False professors, and, I suppose, false and inefficient ministers, found their way into the churches of Christ, and, doubtless, into the pastoral office, in the days of the apostles themselves; nor does it appear to be the will, or to enter into the plans of the great Head of the church, entirely to prevent such intrusions. In this respect, as well as in others, tares will be found amongst wheat till the harvest. I make these observations because there are some in the religious world who have passed, in my apprehension, uncharitable censures on ministers, and churches, and committees of colleges, as it regarded their care, or want of care, in their encouragement of candidates for the Gospel ministry; some who have expected more than human prudence could accomplish, and have condemned, when there is reason to hope our great Master will say, "They have

done what they could."* Still, it is not denied that there may have been a deficiency of vigilance and anxiety in some cases; and that in others, charity, and kindness, and friendship may have prevented the exercise of impartial judgment, and of a due concern for the welfare of the church of God, and that several have thus gained admission into the pastoral office, against whom the door ought to have been closed; and whose exclusion would have been an act of kindness to themselves, as well as a benefit to the cause of religion. It is possible, too, that for want of attention and caution, some may have been discouraged by the neglect which they experienced, and by the obstacles which were thrown in their way, who ought to have been "thrust out as labourers into the vineyard."

It must also be taken into the account that pastors and churches are sometimes placed in difficult circumstances by the specious appearances and professions, the pertinacity and determination of candidates for admission into our colleges, and by the partiality and influence of their friends; and, in other cases, by the prejudices of those who would always prevent a prophet from having any honour in his own country, and, therefore, by the danger of giving offence, and disturbing the peace of the church.

It is evident, also, that the first step in this business is the most important; it is extremely desirable, that respecting it a correct judgment should be formed. When it is once taken, when a young man has been admitted into any of our theological institutions, the difficulty and the delicacy of preventing him from proceeding are much increased, and they are augmented at every succeeding stage of the progress. Business may have been given up. Encouraging prospects of success in secular pursuits may have been disregarded, considerable expense may have been incurred, and great exertions made, to procure preparatory instruction. Flattering hopes may have been indulged and even avowed, the disappointment of which may cause much pain and mortification. Retreat may be viewed as synonymous with disgrace. All these things, and others which might be mentioned, render it supremely desirable, that every prudent and eligible precaution should be used, before any young brethren are encouraged to present themselves for admission into our schools of the prophets. This, it may be hoped, would, by the blessing of God, prevent some painful, and, it may be added, some disgraceful failures, as well as economise those

* They have generally, perhaps I may say always, endeavoured to select the best of those of whom Jesus Christ, in the dispensations of his providence, and by the instrumentality of his churches, has given them the choice, and this is all they can do in time to come. There has never, as far as I know, been a great superabundance of ministers amongst the Independents; and, perhaps, it would be difficult to find an instance in which any who were superior in intellect and piety, have been superseded by those who were inferior.

funds which are furnished by the liberality of our churches for the support of our colleges, the raising of which funds requires the most laborious and self-denying exertions.

What plan, then, can be devised to avoid the evils which have been mentioned, and to prevent, as far as possible, the admission of incompetent persons into the office of pastors and teachers, as well as to bring forward the most eligible that our religious societies can furnish ; and thus to raise the character of the dissenting ministry, and to subserve the cause of Independency, and especially of pure and undefiled religion ? Our entire dependence on the guidance and blessing of the great Head of the church, is explicitly and solemnly owned. He alone can qualify saints for the work of the ministry, by bestowing the requisite natural and spiritual endowments. He communicates the right disposition, including a cordial love of the work of the preacher and pastor, and a preference of it to all others. He opens the door, in the course of his providence, by which all who would be faithful under-shepherds must enter. To Him, therefore, constant and fervent prayer ought to be made by all the churches, as well as by individual Christians—(prayer much more fervent and importunate than is offered—how seldom do we hear our colleges, or the furnishing of suitable candidates for the ministerial office, mentioned in the devotions of the sanctuary or of the family!)—that He would furnish the church with pastors after his own heart. Do not facts prove a deficiency of intelligent, real concern here ? But he raises up his ministers by the instrumentality of his churches and their pastors ; and, therefore, it is incumbent on them to lay hands suddenly on no man, and to put in requisition the greatest care and prudence, that they may commit the work of the ministry only to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

The most eligible plan, in addition to the means that are already employed, for accomplishing the object under consideration, and, indeed, almost the only feasible or practicable one that suggests itself to the writer of this paper, is, that the ministers and churches of each locality should associate together for mutual assistance in this important matter. For this purpose, the whole Independent community might be divided into convenient districts, each containing from four or five to eight or ten churches, according to circumstances and facilities of intercourse. Let their pastors, with other gentlemen, if it were thought necessary, chosen by the churches, associate for the purpose of ascertaining the character and examining the claims of candidates for the Gospel ministry, by exercising a kind, and fraternal, yet vigilant inspection over them ; by making such inquiries respecting their tempers and general conduct as might be deemed necessary ; by testing their abilities for public speaking and for the acquisition of learning ; by observing the way in which they acquit themselves at prayer-meetings, and in delivering addresses in Sabbath-schools, and by requiring

from them written essays on various subjects; and whenever it might be deemed necessary, by placing them under the care of a minister, in order to have his report respecting both their character and abilities. It is to be wished, that this could be done much more extensively than it ever has been. At the same time, one fact must not be concealed or overlooked, with which all are acquainted who have had any experience in the matter, that when young men know that their admission into a college depends almost entirely on the report of a tutor, they will conceal tempers which afterwards, when they feel that they are more independent, they indulge, and manifest an amiableness and docility, and even a degree of seriousness, which present an humbling contrast to their future conduct; so that their teachers have not so good an opportunity of judging respecting their tempers and piety, whatever may be the case with regard to ability, as might be imagined. Let the commendation of these district associations be a *sine qua non*, except in extraordinary cases, for recommendations to the committees of our colleges. The plan recommended would afford an opportunity of testing the earnestness and temper of the candidates, and the ordeal which it would render necessary might prevent applications from those who had any cause to fear detection; and indeed from all but those who were conscious that their motives were pure, and whose hearts were in the work to which they were looking forward. The districts, in some cases, might comprise all the churches in a town. When the towns were large, and the churches numerous, it might be deemed advisable to divide them into two or more districts, and to associate with them some churches in the vicinity. In the country, regard must be had to the number of societies in the different localities, and the facility of intercourse.*

* Objections on various grounds, have been made to these associations or committees. Some have said, there would be in them a division of the responsibility, and consequently it would be less deeply felt, than it otherwise would have been by each individual, and especially by the church and pastor of the candidate: to this it may be replied,—The responsibility would still be sufficiently weighty; and the plan suggested *might*, nay, I apprehend *would*, render all *more* sensible of their responsibility, by attaching greater importance than is now done, to the selection of candidates, and directing more attention to this important affair. I am sure, I have never had to recommend a young man for admission into a college, when I would not have been glad of the assistance of other ministers and churches. I must entirely and decidedly dissent from those who think that the choice of candidates for the ministry should be left to the pastor himself, and that with it the churches have nothing to do. They have as good a right to be consulted in this matter, as in the choice of their pastors, and they have often a better opportunity of gaining an acquaintance with the real character of those candidates than ministers can have; and in the present state of things amongst us, on the churches the support of the schools of the prophets, and therefore of those who enjoy the privileges which they afford, must devolve.

It might also be well for these associations not to confine their attention to such as solicit admission into our colleges, but to look around them in order to find out those who are most eminent for piety and talent in their various congregations, and to suggest to them the propriety of devoting themselves to the preaching of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, and in some instances to urge them to consecrate themselves to it, though it might cost them some pecuniary sacrifices. The apostle exhorted the church at Jerusalem to look out men of good report, whom they might appoint to the office of deacons. And why should not our churches look out the most eligible young brethren, in order to introduce them to the pastoral office? Facts prove that some who have felt an earnest desire to be ministers of the Gospel, and who have even thought themselves moved by the Holy Ghost to enter the ministry, were never called to its work nor qualified for its duties, and that others who were at first reluctant to take it upon them, have conscientiously discharged all its offices and labours, and have been eminently blessed by God to the accomplishment of its sacred purposes. Has not the selection of pastors and teachers been left too much to the feelings and wishes of the individuals themselves, and to the partialities of friends or relatives? Have sanctified judgment and concern for the honour of God and the success of the Redeemer's cause, had their due influence in this important work? Some have suggested, and others maintained the propriety, in order to prevent applications from unqualified persons, or on their behalf, the requisition of a certain sum, (say £10 or £15 annually,) during the term of continuance in the college from the individuals themselves, or from the churches by whom they were recommended. This, it is thought, would render both the one and the other more cautious than they sometimes are, and cause them to count the cost in every point of view. And it is hoped by many, that the plan adopted by our friends at Manchester, of requiring from every student the sum of £30 per annum for his board, will operate very beneficially in this respect as well as in some others. The objection to this plan, and the fear which it excites in the breast of several are, that it may discourage some, and throw insuperable obstacles in their way, who would be most eligible candidates, but could not raise or procure the required sum,—some, whose qualifications might be solid, but not of such an order as to attract much notice, or to induce others to afford them pecuniary assistance. There have been, perhaps, not a few acceptable and highly useful ministers, and probably there are some at present, who never could have procured the requisite education, and never would have separated themselves to the Gospel of God (to use the expression of the apostle Paul,) had it not been for the gratuitous education afforded them by our colleges. To this it may be replied, that the formation of such local district committees as have been recommended, might be the means of securing to

all who needed it, and where in every respect eligible, the requisite pecuniary assistance; because they would not then be dependent for recommendation and support on any one church, but would have the attention of several directed to their claims, and might expect assistance from many. Indeed, one advantage of the proposed plan would be, that it would direct the attention of our churches more than has hitherto been done to the important subject of colleges for the education of the rising ministry, and to their own duty in respect to them; and it might thus cause many prayers and thanksgivings to God on their behalf, and lead to combined and successful efforts to furnish them with the best candidates that could be procured for the advantages which they afford. Perhaps, however, too much has sometimes been said respecting the eleemosynary character of our colleges, and the importance of raising them above it. None of those who enter them, were previously paupers, and none who are fit to enter them, desire to be put "into the priest's office that they may eat a piece of bread." They all leave employments by which they could honourably and usefully support themselves; and, in several cases, by which they might have risen to opulence; and they frequently do so in compliance with the suggestions and wishes of their ministers and churches. Jesus Christ has ordained that "they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." Does he not expect then that those who are preparing to preach it, will be, as far as necessary, supported in their preparatory studies? This is a point which deserves more attention than it has yet received.

HINTS RESPECTING THE PENNY PERIODICAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

SIR,—I have observed with great pleasure the resolution come to, at the meeting of the Congregational Union at Manchester, to set on foot "A Penny Monthly Magazine," and think that the design reaches the acme of utility, in the department of minor religious publications.

It puts, in various ways, the power of widely disseminating Divine truth in the hands of all who are willing to employ it, and may be made, by a little attention and care on their part, to insure its being rendered availing. The copies will be *given* instead of being *lent*; so that the donor, in giving each new number, may becomingly ask if the former one has been used.

My particular object, however, is to suggest to *heads of families*, the habit of giving a copy to *each of his or her servants*, with the recommendation to read them, which, by the inquiry above suggested, and in other incidental ways, may be ascertained.

The cost so small—the object so important—the number of distributors so vast—and of readers so incalculable—to what an extent the diffusion if zealously entered upon may be carried—who can tell? certainly beyond that of any other prior production of the press.

A SOWER.

REVIEWS.

1. *The Morning Exercises at Cripplegate, St.-Giles-in-the-Fields, and in Southwark: being Divers Sermons, preached A.D. 1659—1689. By several Ministers of the Gospel in or near London. Fifth Edition, carefully collated and corrected, with Notes and Translations, by James Nichols.* In six volumes 8vo. pp. 688, 692, 624, 616, 728, 804. London: Thomas Tegg.
2. *Memoirs of the Seventy-five Eminent Divines whose Discourses form the Morning Exercises at Cripplegate, St.-Giles-in-the-Fields, and in Southwark: with an Outline of a Sermon from each Author. By Samuel Dunn.* 8vo. pp. 232. London: J. Snow.

As a century has now passed away since the last formidable effort was made to rekindle in our fatherland the flames of civil conflict, and as two hundred years have elapsed since the soil of England was trodden by hostile armies, and saturated with the blood of her best and bravest sons, so it is extremely difficult to realise, in halcyon days like the present, what a furious and frightful thing civil war really is; or adequately to appreciate the goodness of Divine Providence in preserving us at peace amongst ourselves, and permitting "every man to sit under his vine, and under his fig-tree, none making him afraid."

The invaluable lectures at the head of this article call to mind the circumstances under which "The Morning Exercises" were set up, when the last great national struggle for English liberty began, and when, amidst the terrors and dangers of that great war of passions and principles, myriads of devout Christians in this city were calmed and comforted by the exercises of devotion, and found their God to be "a very present help in trouble."

On the 25th of August, 1642, Charles the First erected his standard at Nottingham, and commenced his march towards the capital, in which he was directed by the battle of Edge Hill, that was fought on Lord's-day, Oct. 23rd, when that dubious victory was mainly won by the heroism of Col. Hollis's regiment of London Red-coats. The timid tactics of the Earl of Essex, led him to withdraw the parliamentary forces towards Coventry, and thus left the king free to pursue his march towards the metropolis. At length the thunder of Prince Rupert's cannon was heard at Brentford, and the trained bands of London were marched out to Turnham Green to repel the enemy. Many city matrons and maidens had already tasted the bitterness of civil

war, in the loss of their sons and brothers at Edge Hill; and now that their fathers and husbands were called to arms, they had but one refuge left—the sanctuary of their God.

At that time John Milton was living in a pleasant house, surrounded by a garden, in Aldersgate-street, at that time more open and airy than Regent's Park is now, for it was beyond the mouldering walls of the old city, and towards the open fields, all exposed to the assaults of the enemy. Having but little faith in the ability of the trained citizens to defend the capital against the practised army of the king, he who had provoked dislike as a politician, thought it prudent to throw the charm of poetry over his beloved dwelling-place. He, therefore, composed a noble sonnet, "when the assault was intended to the city," which reveals how near danger seemed even to one of London's boldest and most patriotic sons—

" Captain, or colonel, or knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them—and him within protect from harms."

Happily, "this city of refuge, this mansion-house of liberty," the poet's own words, "was encompassed and surrounded with the protection of God." The state of the king's artillery made it prudent for him to retreat, and the indecision of Essex prevented a battle, and the sad spectacle of pale and bleeding Englishmen, wounded by English hands, being brought to the hospitals of their native city to languish and to die.

After a winter spent in fruitless negotiations, the campaign was opened again in the spring, and prosecuted with such vigour, that by midsummer, 1643, the king seemed master of the field, and the city and parliament were without any fortifications but such as those old Sparta used, the hearts of her courageous sons. "But now was begun," says May, the historian of the Long Parliament, "the large intrenchment, which encompassed not only the city, but the suburbs on every side, containing about twelve miles in circuit. That great work was by many hands completed in a short time: it being then the practice for thousands to go out every day and dig, all professions, trades, and occupations, taking their turns: not the inferior tradesmen only, but gentlemen of the best quality, knights, and ladies, for the encouragement of others, resorted to the works daily, not as spectators, but as assistants, carrying themselves spades, mattocks, and other suitable implements: so that it became a pleasant spectacle at London, to see them going out in such order, and numbers with drums beating before them: which put life into the drooping people, being taken for a happy omen, that in so low a condition they yet seemed not to despair." It was well for the people that they possessed springs of hope and

consolation more enduring than martial music and congregated multitudes could inspire. Neal, in his History of the Puritans, informs us, that "besides the monthly fast, the opening of the war gave rise to another exercise of prayer and exhortation to repentance, *for an hour every morning in the week*. Most of the citizens of London, having some near relation or friend in the army of the Earl of Essex, so many bills were sent up to the pulpit every Lord's-day, (requesting prayer) for their preservation, that their ministers had neither time to read them, or to recommend their calls to God in prayer: it was, therefore, agreed by the London divines, to separate an hour for this purpose every morning, one-half to be spent in prayer, and the other in a suitable exhortation to the people. The Rev. Thomas Case began it in his church, at seven in the morning, and when it had continued there a month, it was removed by turns to other churches at a distance, for the accommodation of the several parts of the city, and was called *The Morning Exercises*. The service was performed by divers ministers, and earnest intercessions were made in the presence of a numerous and crowded audience, for the welfare of the public as well as particular cases."*

A similar statement is given by Matthew Henry, in the Life of his father, Philip Henry. "Soon after these unhappy wars began, there was a *daily morning lecture* set up at the Abbey Church, (Westminster,) between six and eight of the clock, and preached in course, by seven worthy members of the Assembly of Divines, (then sitting,) viz., Mr. Marshall, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Herle, Dr. Staunton, Mr. Nye, Mr. Whitaker, and Mr. Hill. It was the request of his pious mother to Mr. Busby, the master of Westminster School, that he would give her son, then a lad, leave to attend that lecture daily, which he did, and the Lord was pleased to make good impressions on his soul, by the sermons he heard there." Mr. Case, therefore, referring "to his time of England's troubles, and to those who were of a fearful heart, and a troubled spirit," observes with much beauty, and we doubt not with equal truth—"Many poor Christians, who in times of public dangers and confessions, have come to these morning-assemblies, like the Marys to the sepulchre of our Lord, with their hearts full of fears, and their eyes full of tears, have been dismissed from those assemblies 'with fear and great joy:' their hearts have been revived, and their hands strengthened in the Lord their God."

"The Morning Exercises," he adds, "have had some advantages above other assemblies:—*Partly*, by reason of the frequency and assiduity of them. Sabbath-day sermons and weekly lectures being distanced with such long intervals of worldly encumbrances, are for the most part forgotten before the return of their weekly course; whereas, these exercises treading so close upon the heels one of another,

* Part ii. chap. xii.

they that have constantly attended them have, as it were, lived under a constant vision, the sun of the Gospel arising upon them as assiduously as the sun in the firmament; whereby they have been carried on in a daily progress of Gospel-proficiency.

"And partly, the preachers, by a kind of secret instinct of the Spirit, having been directed in their order to preach seasonable things, *παρόσην ἀληθείαν*, as the apostle calls it, 'present truth,' (2 Peter i. 12,) truth most proper to the present state of things; carefully obviating the errors of the times. And not only so, but sometimes, as if there had been a design laid by mutual consent, they had been guided to preach methodical truths. Their sermons have been knit together, and not without some natural connexion, into a kind of *ὑποπόσις*, or 'module,' of evangelical doctrine; at least, so far as [that] it had not been difficult to find out, not only consent, but a kind of dependence between their successive discourses, that might be of more than ordinary help to their auditors; as in this place [St.-Giles-in-the-Fields] about this time four years; [May 1655:] and since, in a neighbouring congregation, [at St.-Martin's-in-the-Fields,] by some short notes, published for the help of weaker Christians may appear. But now, brethren, behold 'I show you a more excellent way.' That which sometime hath fallen out providentially, and but in a very imperfect way, is now, *de industria*, [of set purpose] and by preagreement and consent, intended, and designed among you in this course of '*The Morning Exercise*;' namely, that which the apostle commends to Timothy's care and custody,—a *ὑποπόσις*, or 'form of sound words;' a series, or delineation of some of the chief points and heads of Gospel doctrine methodically collected and digested, as far as the narrow circle of so few days will contain. 'And this will we do if God permit.'"

Such are the historical accounts which the Rev. Thomas Case gave of these lectures, when, in May, 1659, he began in his own church, the first series which was published; for he had then been preferred from St. Mary Magdalen, Milk-street, where it will be remembered he commenced these Exercises, to St.-Giles-in-the-Fields, where he was attended by a noble and influential auditory.

We have seen how, at the first outbreak of the civil war, the Londoners fled to the sanctuary, and sought after God as their fortress, their high tower, and their deliverer. But when the city was entirely surrounded by an earthly rampart, with bastions and redoubts, from Wapping to Whitechapel, thence to Shoreditch, and by St. John Street, to Islington, and on again towards Bloomsbury, St. Giles's, Soho, Hyde Park, and Constitution Hill, and so by Chelsea and Tothill-fields, to the Thames, and then across the river from Vauxhall, St. George's Fields, Blackman Street, and Kent Street, Southwark, to the shore of the Thames again; when these lines were regularly defended, and, what was more soothing still, the brunt of the conflict was falling upon distant counties, it is probable that the panic abated in the city, and with it, the zealous attendance of the people, day by day, on the morning exercises declined also.

The campaign of 1645 was commenced with hopeful appearances for the Royalist party, and Charles, in order to produce a sensation in the capital, resolved to make a spirited attack upon some Parliamentary garrison in the centre of England. Leicester was the devoted town

selected. Rupert invested it on the last day of May, and by a vehement and persevering assault, which quite suited the temperament of that fiery soldier, it was carried the very same day that the army sat down before it. "The governor, and all the officers and soldiers, to the number of twelve hundred, threw down their arms, and became prisoners of war: whilst the conquerors pursued their advantages," says Clarendon, "with the usual license of rapine and plunder, and miserably sacked the whole town, without any distinction of persons or places: churches and hospitals, as well as other houses, were made a prey to the enraged and greedy soldiers, to the exceeding regret of the king, who well knew that, how disaffected soever that town was generally, there were yet many who had faithful hearts towards him, and who he heartily wished to distinguish from the rest; but those seasons admit no difference of persons."

The tidings of this horrible affair reached London, and while they "made a wonderful impression of terror upon the hearts of those at Westminster," the citizens began to fear that if the stone walls of Leicester would not resist the fierce cannonade of Prince Rupert, the earthen bastions of their own suburbs might be soon carried by his brave but dissolute and cruel soldiery. Hence there was a revival of the Morning Exercises at St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, in May, 1645, and from which Mr. Case dates his commencement of the more systematic lectures. "Truly God has been pleased to make his morning lecture a great mercy to this city ever since it was first erected: which was when Leicester was besieged." The battle of Naseby quickly followed, which the Royalists lost, and, to use Clarendon's words, "the king and the kingdom with it." The tide of war now receded from the metropolis, and the last waves of that frightful storm broke upon the distant provinces.

The establishment of a settled government, enabled the ministers to give themselves time for erudite and systematic study, and that "Exercise" which was daily held during the war throughout the year, was now delivered only day by day throughout the month. Mr. Case edited the first course, entitled *The Morning Exercise Methodised, or certain chief Heads and Points of the Christian Religion opened and improved in divers Sermons*, which was published 1660. He tells us that every preacher "took the care of transcribing his own discourse, and sending me the copy; accordingly I submit it to the press." He dedicated the volume to Lords Warwick, Scarsdale, Wharton, and others of his noble hearers, and urges his friends to purchase these sermons; which, if the ministry should fail, (a judgment which England was never in such danger of, since the Gospel was restored,) and all other helps, both in public and private, should be cut off, (which God forbid!) yet this one book, next to the Bible, would be a stock of divinity which might furnish you with the knowledge of the

essentials of religion, and be like manna to you in the wilderness, till you come to Canaan."

The second course, entitled "*Several Cases of Conscience practically resolved*," were delivered at St. Giles's church, Cripplegate, of which the Rev. Samuel Annesley was the incumbent. He procured the services of his brethren, and edited the volume, which he inscribed "to my most unfeigned beloved parishioners."

The third course was not delivered till the spring of 1674, fifteen years after the preceding; and what a change had passed in that interval! Charles II. had been restored, Episcopacy re-established, the Act of Uniformity passed: the Ejectment followed, the Five Mile and Canonical Acts made law, and most rigorously enforced. The deadly plague had desolated London and the provinces—a frightful conflagration had reduced the ancient metropolis to ruin, and infidelity and licentiousness had demoralised the people. All things were altered. But the Bartholomew confessors remained unchanged. By the grace of God, "they were stedfast, unmoveable;" and Manton and Charnock, Poole and Baxter, Bates and Owen, Cole and Wilkinson, were ready to renew their faithful testimony to "the truth as it is in Jesus."

But where was this *third* course delivered? Not at Cripplegate church, most assuredly, for Dr. Annesley had been ejected thence. The volume is entitled, "*A Supplement to the Morning Exercises at Cripplegate; or, several more cases of conscience practically resolved, by sundry ministers.*" It is a Supplement to Exercises at Cripplegate, but it does not say that these discourses were preached there. In that parish, indeed, there was "a certain room adjoining to a dwelling-house of Thomas Doolittle, in Mugwell Street," "which, in pursuance of our declaration of the 11th of March, 167 $\frac{1}{2}$, we allow," says the royal license, "to be a place for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, to meet and assemble in, in order to their public worship and devotion," &c. This was the first meeting-house built after the fire of London, 1666, and was new at the date of this course, and from Matthew Henry's description (July 18, 1680,) was a most attractive place of worship. To those who recollect the dismal old meeting-house before it was pulled down, the following description will be sufficiently amusing.

"Yesterday," says Matthew to his sisters, "yesterday we went to Mr. Doolittle's meeting place; his church, I may call it, for I believe there is many a church that will not hold so many people. There are several galleries; it is all pewed, and a brave pulpit, a great height above the people." Now, as Mr. Doolittle delivered one of the discourses of his third series, it is highly probable that he accommodated his brethren in "Cripplegate" still. If this conjecture be not true, then we should suppose they were delivered in Dr. Annesley's own meeting-house, in Little St. Helen's, Bishopsgate street, which is, indeed,

probable by the fact that this series is not inscribed to his "beloved parishioners," but, "to that part of Christ's flock to which I am now specially related."

The *fourth* course in the order of time, though the last in this edition, is, "*The Morning Exercises against Popery*"—"preached lately in Southwark," 1675. Those who recall the state of England at that period will see how opportunely and faithfully these non-conformist lecturers came forward to renew their protest against the man of sin. This course originated with Mr. Nathaniel Vincent, one of the ejected ministers, who had a large congregation at a meeting-house near Maese, or Maze, in the parish of St. Olave, Southwark. He also edited the volume; and in the address "To the Reader," Mr. V. remarks—

"Since England was formerly such a tributary to the see of Rome, and such vast sums of money were carried yearly from hence thither; we are not to doubt, but the pope looks upon us with grief, that he has lost us, and with an earnest desire to regain us. His instruments are more than ordinary busy to this end, insomuch that both king and parliament have taken public notice of it. This lecture, therefore, against popery is very seasonable; and if (which I earnestly beg) this labour be made successful to redeem any of them who have been seduced, or to arm and defend the people against one of the greatest visible enemies that Christ has in the world, I shall exceedingly rejoice that my pulpit was so much honoured by my fathers and brethren when they preached in it, and that ever such a project against popery came into my mind."

This settles the history and locality of these lectures beyond dispute.

The *fifth* course, which was delivered in October, 1682, is entitled, "*A Continuation of Morning Exercise Questions, and Cases of Conscience, practically resolved by sundry Ministers.*" This is the *third* series, edited by Dr. Annesley, and made the third volume of the present edition. He says to the reader—

"What I have formerly endeavoured in these exercises, I need not here tell you; my design is still the same: when too many are contending about comparatively trifles or worse, I would do my utmost, by calling in better help than mine own, to promote practical godliness."

In conclusion, he refers to the persecutions against the Nonconformists, which were then reviving—

"Several of these had been more polished, had not the authors and their books been separated; and I must confess, that the tolerable errors of the press are as many, as an ingenuous reader can well pardon: what then can I say for those which are inexcusable? Bear with this word of alleviation; it was next to impossible for every one (in our present circumstances) to correct his own sermon, and none else could so well do it."

The *sixth* and concluding series of Lectures was not preached till after the blessed revolution had taken place. They are entitled, "*Casuistical Morning Exercises at Cripplegate. The fourth volume,*

preached in October, 1689 ;" and, we doubt not, at Mr. Doolittle's meeting-house there. The fine old men who delivered them, rich in the learned treasures of a studious life, and yet more eminent for their Christian graces and ministerial usefulness, after struggling through more than forty years of public service, in times of unprecedented dangers, temptations, and sufferings, were permitted to see the civil and sacred liberties of their country placed on a firm and, we trust, immovable basis. How must the languid pulsations of their hearts have been quickened, and what tears of joy must have filled their eyes, at the thought that they had been spared to witness the triumph of those principles of truth and liberty for which they had prayed so often, and suffered so much ! Blessed men ! "their works do follow them." They laboured, and we have entered into their labours, and by the enterprise of a liberal bookseller of their beloved city, those labours will now be transmitted to future ages. Complete sets of these lectures were extremely rare and very costly, and when acquired were found to be disfigured by untold typographical and other errors, the effects of the circumstances under which they were printed and reprinted. We congratulate Mr. Tegg on the completion of his noble monument to the memory of the Morning Lecturers of the seventeenth century, which is worthy of the men and of the great topics upon which they discoursed. Mr. James Nichol, the editor, has brought to his task the tact of a printer and the learning of a scholar, and thus has made the *fifth* the standard edition of "The Morning Exercises." Nor can we omit to notice the laborious and invaluable services of Mr. Prebendary Horne and his assistants, Messrs. Grabham and Higdon, who have reduced the multifarious contents of these six volumes under "*five copious and useful Index's*," extending over more than a hundred closely printed octavo pages, and forming, what every minister and scholar will know how to appreciate, "an ample body of references, directing the attention to every topic and passage of consequence." Nor can we look through the index of the principal matters contained in these six closely-printed octavo volumes, spread over more than four thousand crowded pages, and observe the doctrinal and practical, the polemical and casuistical discussions they contain, and the stores of secular and sacred learning by which they are illustrated, without concluding that this work now forms one of the most valuable repositories of theological knowledge in the English language.

Mr. Dunn's biographical sketches of the seventy-five authors of these Lectures are creditable to his industry, and will form a very appropriate companion and supplement to the larger work.

1. *Confessions of a Convert from Baptism in Water to Baptism with Water.* 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 130. London: Snow.
2. *The Right of Infants to Baptism; with a Brief Essay on the Mode of Baptizing.* By W. Davis, Hastings. London: Ball, Arnold, and Co.

WE most heartily wish that the controversy on baptism were terminated, if not in perfect agreement of opinion, at least in agreement to live together in love. We know of nothing more disgraceful than the separation from each other, of pædo and anti-pædobaptists. We believe that it straitens the Spirit of God, and does serious mischief to the churches concerned. We do not think that *we* are in the fault in this matter; we are ready, we have long been ready, for a truce. But unhappily so long as our Baptist friends, following such pertinacious oracles as Dr. Carson, will insist that the word means *to dip and nothing else*, whilst all the world besides knows that it is not a modal verb at all; and so long as they refuse to acknowledge the validity of our baptisms *with water rather than in water*, denying them to be conscientious, and ascribing our conduct to *wilful blindness*, there appears no remedy for our divisions; and at present we can only weep at such a strife among brethren. But there is no feature of the case more melancholy to contemplate, than the spirit which characterises, to so great an extent, the holders of these views; as if to compensate for the comparative fewness of their numbers, the zeal of each for dipping seems to be systematically cultivated to a fanatical height; no sooner does man, woman, or child pass under the water, than such person is made to compass sea and land to make one proselyte: having himself done the heroic, he acquires the *esprit du corps* peculiar to the sect;—from the self-complacent height to which the performance of the tremendous act of self-denial has raised him, insinuates that whoever is reluctant to encounter the baptismal flood, is lacking in courage or honesty, and not unfrequently speaks of such in the language of bitter or contemptuous pity. There is another fault not less common, nor less offensive to an upright mind; we mean the iteration and reiteration to youthful and ignorant persons of arguments, known to be worthless and unsound, just because they are adapted *ad captandum vulgus*. We really have been grieved at the pertinacity with which such silly proofs of primitive immersion as are derived, *e. g.*, from the much water of Enon, and the *going down into and coming up out of the water*, &c., have been urged on recent unsuspecting converts.* Now it is as a rebuke to *this class of persons* that the Confessions were written,—and we are

* The ink of this sentence was hardly dry, when a young man entered our study to tell us, how he was assailed in this very manner, and how perplexed his mind was by this very argument.

glad that the author has distinctly stated this in the preface, for we believe with him that among Immersionists are to be found very many of the excellent of the earth, and who would scorn designedly to employ an unworthy argument: and yet, while this book is intended for the former, we think it may do good service in some respects to the latter also; for if our observations have been correct, there are a spirit and tone attendant on baptism, as there are on Methodism, which seem infectious, and which to an easily perceptible though smaller extent is caught by even the best and most intelligent members of either body, without their knowing it. We well recollect the eagerness with which, in our younger days, we embraced every opportunity of hearing that great and good man, the late Richard Watson; we never listened to his ministry but with intense delight: yet when he came to offer the concluding prayer of the service, we were always amazed that a man of so much taste and refinement could stoop to the artifice of constructing his sentences, making the frequent and solemn pause, as if to *invite* the sigh, and the groan, and to produce the discordant sounds of Glory, Hallelujah, Amen. We are sure, however, there was no artifice in him. Habit had familiarised him to it, so that he felt no impropriety in what is apt, unduly perhaps, to offend our quiet and decorum. In like manner our more intelligent Baptist brethren, ever breathing an atmosphere of false and intemperate zeal for dipping, are scarcely aware of its unhappy effects upon their spirit. Judging from their conduct one would conclude, that the getting of a convert under water was to them a matter of such vast consequence, that in the use of measures, good or bad, to secure it, the end sanctified the means.

We ourselves, when first awakened to a just sense of the importance of religion, were placed in circumstances very similar to those of our autobiographer. We were waylaid by Baptist brethren on every side. Nothing could be plainer, we were told, with an air of most arrogant infallibility, than that the first baptisms were dippings; only as it was a trial to flesh and blood, men would not see it—or, seeing it, tried to persuade themselves it was not necessary now; and well do we remember how long and sorely our uninstructed mind was disturbed by a variety of superficial reasonings, and unworthy insinuations; and by what distressing fears our conscience was pained, lest we should be found guilty of disobedience to one of the positive commands of our dear and adorable Redeemer. Fortunately for us we had a pastor of great sagacity and shrewdness; we made up our minds at length to tell him our difficulty and ask his aid. He replied by proposing some half-dozen questions on the most popular points that had been urged upon us, and sent us to seek an answer. It was enough; we soon saw, or thought we saw, the shallowness of the reasonings by which we had been posed, and were convinced that from the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist, to the close of the life of the beloved disciple, no

dippings were practised by Divine authority ; we have not failed since then to examine the question in those bearings which at that time we were not competent to investigate, and have arrived at the firm, and we suppose now, the unalterable persuasion, that the Immersionist is wrong.

Nevertheless the same plausibilities continue to be used in some quarters, and the same disingenuous artifices to be employed to make dippers as then ; and it is time for us to stand on the defensive. Such a book as that before us, we have often wished to see—of treatises we have enough of great excellence ; but till now, we have looked in vain for a small volume thoroughly *ad rem*, and suited to those classes of persons who are most exposed to the kind of attack in question. It most graphically describes the effects of the zeal of the thorough-going dipper to make converts—sketches to the life his modes of assault, and admirably puts those stale and common-place arguments which are found to tell with most effect on superficial and unreflecting minds ; the former it thoroughly exposes, the latter it utterly overthrows. We have the fire-side conversation ; the friendly interviews ; the discussion with the pastor and the pastor's wife, the deacon and the deacon's daughter ; the sermon of the neighbouring minister, who is supposed to be an Apollos on this question of questions ; together with a variety of letters on the points at issue. The author is master of his subject ; he writes well and fluently, and has the happy knack of saying just what he means. If he is not strictly an autobiographer, (which, as he has not chosen to tell us, we shall not attempt to determine,) but merely embodies in the form of Confessions matters of every-day occurrence, he is a keen and exact observer ; and could scarcely have told his tale better if he had been personally concerned in every incident. If the book is rendered agreeable by its pleasantry and and humour, it is made instructive also by the point and force of its reasonings. The author fairly meets the arguments, and replies to the objections of his opponents : and if a vein of satire lies under some passages, it is only when the character of those arguments renders impossible any other kind of answer. Having an instinctive aversion to all the tricks of polemics, and a thorough abhorrence of them when brought to defend truth, we subjected it to a rigorous examination ; and are happy to be able to say, that we could not discover an instance of shift, of evasion, or of sophistry. There is wit and ingenuity ; and as we read it, the happy turn and shrewd retort often provoked a smile ; but these are never found where there should be serious argumentation, and never suffered to occupy the place of an accurate logic. We shall not be surprised if its smartness and pungency should shock somewhat disagreeably the nerves of our dipping brethren, and render it an abhorrence to them ; but of this we are sure, fairness and honesty as a polemic must be conceded to our author. We thank him sin-

cerely for its publication, and thank him chiefly on account of that interesting and numerous class of young persons amongst us, who, between the period of their conversion and admission to fellowship, are sought out so eagerly for proselytism; never suffered by certain zealous and dogmatic dippers to have a moment's peace, and just when their moral nature is most susceptible, the conscience liable to evince morbid tenderness, while the mind is unfitted for calm and dispassionate investigation, are literally dragooned into the water by the stern, authoritative and oft-repeated admonition to a fearless and honest obedience to the command of Christ. The only exception we take to the book, relates to a few expressions not quite to our taste, in the first three or four pages; but which, as from their own recurrence they are evidently an oversight, we may safely leave to the writer's discernment to find out and correct, in a second edition. We shall be happy if our remarks should induce the pastors of our churches who find themselves annoyed by the constant guerilla warfare to which we have adverted, to keep a few copies on hand to lend their young friends; most of whom, we are persuaded, would be rendered able, by its perusal, to cope with their particularly kind and considerate assailants, and be satisfied that New Testament baptisms are *with* and not *in* water.

A few remarks on the second work before us. The Rev. W. Davis is well known as the author of an interesting volume on the "True Dignity of Human Nature;" which not only had, like many other volumes, the honour of being presented to the highest personages of the land, but of being read (a favour, we imagine, granted but to the few,) and also emphatically approved. He bends his chief strength to the subjects of baptism, and contends for the right of infants to the ordinance as well of adults, in a manner at once calm and lucid. Not only is his spirit truly Christian, but his reasonings we believe to be sound: and we can hardly conceive of an individual, whose mind was free from previous bias and party prejudice, rising from its perusal without feeling that the extension of the rite to little children is in exact and admirable accordance with the benign and gracious spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that baptism with water, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was intended for man—for universal man—for man of every clime—of every coming age, whether of infantile or of riper years: and that as circumcision was designed to announce to every successive generation of that Israel with whom God had entered into covenant, the fact and grace of such covenant; so baptism, now that God has extended his covenant, is intended to tell Gentile as well as Jew, to tell every creature under heaven,—the sire, the moment the ministry of reconciliation reaches and addresses him,—the infant, on his very entrance into this world of corruption and of sin,—*that God has been before him with a remedy for the fall*, and that through the Mediator of the new covenant there

is pardon, and peace, and life for him. The wise condescension, the tender mercy of such an institution, for such a purpose, commends it to our judgment and our heart; and we recommend Mr. Davis's tract on the *subjects* of baptism, as a fitting companion to the "Confessions" on the *mode*.

"The conversation had turned upon the case of a young lady in the neighbourhood, who, it was supposed, sympathised with Baptist views, but had recently joined the Independent church. This led to some general and very strong remarks against pædo-baptists, and their disregard of God's ordinance, which could only have been justifiable upon their doing this wilfully. . . . I ventured to ask Mr. B. whether a Christian man, who after an honest, searching and prayerful examination, had come to the conclusion that it was his duty to dedicate his children to God by baptism, ought to disregard this conviction, or follow it? At first he attempted, as I thought, to evade the question, and we pressed some doubt whether just such a case could happen as I had supposed; but when I mentioned the names of Owen, Baxter, Howe, Charnock, Watts, Doddridge, Whitfield, Wesley, and the Henrys, and referred to some of our Independent neighbours, whose praise is in all the surrounding churches, he rather shrank from his uncharitable surmise, and said that it was not for him to sit in judgment upon them, and that to their own Master they must stand or fall. Not satisfied with this reply, I pressed my point, when he acknowledged that they must do what they deemed best. 'Well, then,' I added, 'if they entertain the solemn conviction, that God requires them thus to dedicate their children, is not this to observe the Divine ordinance, to do that which is both good and acceptable,—in a word, to obey the baptismal command?' Without a moment's hesitation, he answered in the negative. 'Tell me, then,' I added, 'what is *that* in the service which constitutes its *essence*, and which God chiefly regards? Is it the *mode* in which it is done, or the *spirit*?' He paused for a moment, and then began to speak about the signification of the original word."—*Confessions*, pp. 7, 8.

Now it is the conduct of our brethren exhibited in this passage that we do not like. They can give no account, admit no explanation of the course we pursue, without impeaching our motives, and imputing either dishonesty or disobedience. And then, "*without a moment's hesitation, he answered in the negative.*" What is this but to speak from the Vatican, with the infallibility of "his holiness?" And this by Baptists too!!!

One quotation from the letter to the Rev. Mr. R. We wish we could find room for the whole of the reasonings on the prepositions, which do so much execution among the ignorant; we mean the eternal "into" and "out of the water," and which every thinking man must now prove *just nothing* in favour of dipping; as well as the admirable remarks on *the places* where the rite was administered,—but we must be content with one short paragraph.

"You cannot but know that many wise and upright men reject your theory of baptism, amongst other reasons, because they cannot reconcile it with *the places* and circumstances in which the rite was originally practised. Now their objections were entitled to your attention, and before you spoke so positively on the point, you ought to have noticed them. And I for one should have been much interested to

have heard by what process, for example, the three thousand could have been dipped at Jerusalem on the very day of their conviction. As all the apostles must have been occupied in this labour at the same time, they must have required either a dozen separate baptistries, or one at least twelve times as large as that in which you officiate. Now it would have been a piece of information as curious as it would be valuable, had you even surmised in what part of the city, or from what source, especially during the passover, when water was so precious, the despised Galileans could have obtained this large supply. It would also have been interesting, had you suggested how the multitude were so speedily prepared for the service, and the whole affair despatched with so much ease and expedition, as the inspired narrative would lead us to suppose. You do not believe, I presume, that these foreign Jews, who had been drawn by mere rumour to the place, and without the least conception of the result, came there like those whom Mr. B. recently immersed, suitably dressed for the occasion, or that each of them brought a baptizing suit under his arm. How then was the ablution performed? Were they all plunged in their ordinary apparel, and after their drenching, did they, in this picturesque condition, walk back to their places of abode, to the great edification of the boys and girls of Jerusalem? Or do you suppose, that as soon as they heard the command, 'Be baptized every one of you,' they dispersed, and were seen running in every direction through the streets of the city to their respective dwellings, to procure changes of raiment for the purpose?"—*Confessions*, pp. 70—72.

We predict for the volume a very wide circulation, as well as great usefulness on the side of truth.

CURSORY NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"THE Life of Lorenzo de Medici, called the Magnificent." By William Roscoe. With a memoir of the author, and portrait. Post 8vo. pp. 560. London: David Bogue. 2. "The Works of English Puritan Divines. Bunyan's Tracts. With a Life of Bunyan," by the Rev. James Hamilton. 12mo. pp. 310. London: T. Nelson. We have only one reason for putting these somewhat incongruous volumes together, which is, that each forms the first of a new series of publications, perfectly unprecedented for their beauty and cheapness. Here is a really handsome volume of 560 pages, containing Roscoe's master-piece of history, with a fine portrait of the magnificent Lorenzo, and a life of his biographer, with the numerous notes in Latin, Italian, and French, all translated, and an extensive index, for *three shillings and sixpence*! This will be followed by a series of "the best works of the best authors," at the same rate per volume. Nor is the second less remarkable. It is a very neat reprint of some of John Bunyan's best theological tracts, with a beautiful life by Mr. Hamilton, and a portrait and vignette title-page, for the sum of *eighteen pence* to subscribers, and *two shillings* to non-subscribers. Surely at this rate "knowledge *must* be increased." It is needless to say how cordially we wish success to these enterprises.

"Remarks on a Charge of the Venerable Archdeacon Hare," delivered in the parish church of St. Clement, Hastings, on the 22nd day of July, 1845, by Philagothos. 12mo. pp. 24. London: J. Snow. The whole sincerely Protestant community in this country are indebted to gentlemen who, like Philagothos, will take the pains first to hear, and then to "remark" upon such productions as Archdeacon

Hare's Charge appears to have been; for when those who are regarded as watchmen give an uncertain sound, how are the people to prepare for battle? And when the archdeacons of a Protestant church can become the apologists of those who have joined, or are about to unite, in the communion of Rome, and can vindicate and support grants to Popish colleges, it is high time that they should become the subjects of calm and gentlemanly, Christian and scholar-like remonstrances such as are combined in this able little tract.

"Musings, by the Author of Heart Breathings." London. Darton and Clark. The ancient missal was wont to inspire as much veneration by its illuminated pages and costly covering as by the sentiments it contained. The most splendid apartment in the baronial halls and lordly castles of our country had usually this ornament placed in a gorgeous casket, on a tastefully-sculptured bracket. It answered the two-fold purpose of reminding the owner of the religion he professed, and the duties involved; and also of showing the visitor that the formularies of piety were respected within those walls. Where the missal was, there was usually the sound of the matin and the vesper bell; for religion, with the ancient barons, was treated as a *reality*; a something worthy of being defended by their lives; or a something deserving their scorn and hatred. In the morning assembling of the baron's family, there might be seen the page bearing on a massive silver salver the family missal, while the priest, following with slow and solemn step, met the whole household standing waiting for the matinal benediction,—the lord of the castle and champion equally devout in attitude with the humblest servant or soldier whom he commands. We have indulged in these observations on the ancient missal, because we have witnessed, with much pleasure, the triumph of art producing very much of the beauty of the ancient missal, without the immense expenditure of time which the venerated volume invariably required. "Musings" is a beautiful specimen of ornamental printing. It is a beautiful casket filled with precious gems. It would adorn the boudoir of the noble, and interest the heart of the devout. It contains, what a modern writer has called "seminal thoughts."* It is almost impossible to read one page of "Musings," without finding an impulse given to the productive power of thought. The sentiment proves to be a seed in the mind germinating and producing after its own kind. Works of this class are very valuable. We recommend it as a suitable companion for the invalid, or manual for the genuine Christian, whose time for reading may be very short.

"The Congregational Tune Book," a comprehensive collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes; adapted to various metres, and harmonized for four voices. By Adam Wright. London: T. Nelson, Paternoster Row. Parts I. II. III. When we referred, a few months since, in proof of the multitude of Psalm books with which we were likely to be deluged, to this publication, we certainly did not expect to be presented with such a gem as this promises to be, at such a price. We know but little of either publisher or editor; but the respective part which each has here performed does him the greatest credit. We have never seen psalmody so well and beautifully got up; and sincerely hope, while we have some fears in the matter, that, by its extensive sale, the spirited publisher may be repaid. Three parts lie on our table, comprising ninety-six pages, and about eighty tunes. We wish Hensbury, and perhaps one or two others, had been omitted; but, if these numbers are to be taken as a fair specimen of the whole, we think that when the work is completed, it will be one of the greatest boons in psalmody, which our choirs and young friends have ever received. Let them take it as it comes out; and when, in addition to our old and ever-to-be-admired music, they find that it contains such melodies as Halifax

* "Thoughts upon Thought."

Chapel, Judea, Asylum, St. Jerome, Mount Sinai, Dismission, Antwerp, Belgrave, Brunswick, we are persuaded they will not repent of their bargain. We may be premature in our remarks; but we have been long looking for such a work, and have been disappointed; now, however, we have a strong hope that this will prove just what our choirs and churches want.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

ELEMENTS of Mental and Moral Science. By George Payne, LL.D. Third Edition, enlarged. 8vo. pp. 456. London: Gladding.

The British Quarterly Review, No. IV. November, 1845. London: Jackson and Walford.

The Reformation and Anti-Reformation in Bohemia. From the German. In Two Volumes. 8vo. pp. 444, 442. London: Houlston and Stoneman.

The North British Review, No. VII., for November, 1845. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

Life of Lorenzo de Medici, called the Magnificent. By William Roscoe. With a Memoir of the Author, and a Portrait. Post 8vo. pp. 504. London: David Bogue.

The Philosophy of Human Life; or, The Argument of the Book of Ecclesiastes. By Mrs. Henderson. 12mo. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

The Church of Christ in the Middle Ages. An Historical Sketch, compiled from various authors. By the Author of "Essays on the Church." 12mo. pp. 496. London: Seeley, Burnside, and Seeley.

Temperance and Teetotalism; being a Candid Inquiry into the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of using Distilled and Fermented Liquors, on the grounds of Scripture, Philosophy, and Expediency. By John H. Barrow, Independent Minister, Market-Drayton. 12mo. pp. 80. London: J. Snow.

Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature. By John Kitto, D.D., F.S.A., Parts XXIII. and XXIV. [which complete this very valuable work.] 8vo. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

The Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome truly Represented: in Answer to a Book entitled "A Papist Misrepresented and Represented." By Edward Stillingfleet, D.D. With a Preface and Notes by William Cunningham, D.D. Edinburgh. 12mo. pp. 382. London: R. Groombridge and Sons.

An Introduction to Geography and Astronomy, with the Use of the Globes. By E. and I. Bruce. Tenth Edition. Post 8vo. pp. 356. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

Anti-Christ in Prophecy, and Anti-Christ in Fact. By John Parry. 8vo. pp. 84. Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

The Two Shoals of the True Passage. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, D.D. 18mo. pp. 36. London: R. Groombridge and Co.

The Congregational Calendar and Family Almanac for 1846. Published for the Congregational Union. London: Jackson and Walford.

A Plan for the Abolition of Capital Punishments. By Rev. Thos. Payne, M.A. 18mo. pp. 60. London: C. Gilpin.

CHRONICLE OF BRITISH MISSIONS.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Suffering of the Poor from the Potatoe Disease.

THE pressing and earnest calls for help from some of the rural stations of the Society, in consequence of this wide-spreading calamity, seem to justify the Directors in giving it their first attention in the usual monthly statement. In towns the evil is less felt, as the potatoe is neither cultivated by the poor, nor is it, as in some villages, the chief article of food; the consequences are therefore confined in towns to the bad quality of the root, or the increased price paid for it.

There can be no doubt, that amidst much exaggeration in the public prints respecting the extensive failure of the crops, the prospect is exceedingly gloomy in many parts of England, as it regards multitudes of industrious persons. The extracts which follow these remarks, from the journals of two missionaries, one of them labouring in Dorset and the other in Devon, will give the reader some idea of the evils anticipated. The information which has been received from the missionaries from many of the English counties shows different degrees of loss in this article of food, and the impossibility of ascertaining the real state of things for some time to come. One thing, however, is certain, that if famine may not be the lot of any, scarcity and severe suffering will be the lot of multitudes. Among these are to be found many of God's people, in secluded parts of the country, who are poor as to the world's goods, deprived, by their steady adherence to the principles of the Gospel and of religious liberty, of much pecuniary assistance from parish funds and from benevolent individuals. They have endured many privations in ordinary circumstances, when the winter was cold, and the persecution was hot. Twice since 1840 have the Congregational churches in London been specially appealed to for contributions to aid the afflicted members of Home Missionary churches. The help was promptly and liberally afforded, so that upwards of £800 was distributed, and hundreds of individuals shared in the kind sympathies of sister churches; many being preserved from much sickness, and probably death itself, by this timely aid. The gratitude felt by these humble Christians no tongue can express. The tears they shed when such liberal and unexpected relief came to them from a distance, feebly indicated the emotions of their minds. There were many thanksgivings offered to God for his providential goodness.

The Directors had no intention of referring to this subject a month or two ago. They think there is unmingled evil in encouraging a spirit of dependence on fellow-creatures, either for temporal or spiritual good. Hence the great object kept in view by their agents is, to encourage a spirit of independence—to draw out all the energies the people possess—physically, intellectually, and morally—and to get them, as soon as possible, by their own exertions, to support their families and to sustain the ministry of the Gospel among themselves. They are encouraged to aim at this, however small the result may be at first, in the conviction that this is the healthiest and safest state of things among individuals and among churches of Christ. The present case, however, forms an evident exception. The affliction is not from man, but from God; and surely if Christians can aid their fellow-creatures who suffer more severely from the dispensation than themselves, it is their privilege to do so, and especially those who are of the household of faith. It may be added, that the duty becomes unquestionably more imperative when it is known that spiritual good communicated through our instrumentality has been the very means of exciting that sectarian spirit which may aggravate the evil of temporal suffering.

It is hoped that all that would be really necessary for helping the greatest sufferers might be obtained, if an *addition* was made to the *sacramental* collection on the first Sabbath in January. There is not the smallest wish to interfere with the prior claims of poor members: but as there are churches in London with very few such persons needing the aid of the church, it is hoped that a sufficient sum might be obtained, in town and country, by means of this appropriate collection, to meet the wants of the *members* of the churches. The matter is named now, that the pastors and deacons may consider the propriety of examining the subject before the close of this month.

Great loss to the poor in the potatoe crop—Liberality notwithstanding.

"I am happy to be able to state that in the strength of the Lord I am still enabled to prosecute the objects of the Home Missionary Society in this station. These efforts, in many instances, have been accompanied with the 'demonstration of the Spirit' in turning sinners from 'darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' In the midst of poverty, error, and opposition, our people, I trust, are growing 'in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' The Directors, in reading the reports of the disease in the potatoe crop, have no doubt thought of and prayed for the poor villagers who come more immediately under their observation in the various districts embraced by the Society. In this locality the prospect is most gloomy, as two-thirds of the store potatoes are not fit to be used, and the one-third that is not yet affected cannot be depended on, until it is required for food. This is most distressing, and what the people will do I cannot tell, as the chief, and in numerous families, the only living is nothing but potatoes. In the midst of this state of things, I, although with a degree of reluctance, appealed to the congregation at C—— M—— on behalf of the funds of the Home Missionary Society, stating that the Directors must not be expected to support the Gospel among those who did not do all they could themselves. On this occasion a general desire appeared to be excited to see if more could not be done. The attempt was successful, as some commenced subscribers, others increased, and several doubled their former contributions. Although the whole amount will be but a small sum, yet it proves the estimation in which the Gospel is held, and the gratitude of the people to the Society for its long-continued and valuable favours. In order to cherish this spirit, we held a public meeting in the chapel, which was well attended, notwithstanding the evening was very wet. Numbers had left their work in the fields with their clothes drenched, and there was scarcely a family in the place where the children were not suffering most distressingly in the measles. These things were not anticipated when the time of the meeting was fixed. We were favoured with addresses by the Rev. B. Kent, of Barnstaple, and the Rev. R. Thompson. J. Jones, Esq., of Ilfracombe, came to assist us on this interesting occasion. The collection was very good, and indicated the willingness of the people to do all they can at this their time of inevitable deficiency. The friends who addressed the meeting left, expressing themselves highly gratified at what they had witnessed, while your agent and the people of his charge were enabled to thank God and take courage."

Potatoe Disease and Anticipated Suffering.

"At present much gloom rests upon the minds of our poor on account of the great failure of the potatoe crop. How the poor are to be fed we cannot divine. Field after field is ploughed up not fit for the pigs to eat, and of those which are dug many are rotten; the few that are good very small. We hope a gracious Providence will interpose; but with us many will cry for bread, and behold the Lord hath sent 'cleanness of teeth.' When the potatoe crop is at the best, my flock, in numberless

instances, are never but on the verge of want. May the Lord rebuke us not in anger, but in love! For a minister to dwell in the midst of such naked poverty, who is from desire the pastor, as well as the missionary, is to draw upon his feelings most painfully, and leads him to heave many a sigh and shed many a tear over sufferings he cannot relieve, and privations he can but alleviate in a small degree."

The following extracts from the journals of missionaries furnish a variety of facts, some discouraging, and many that are encouraging. It is considered best to show that all the stations are not alike prosperous and progressive, but at the same time to give evidence that the agents are actively engaged in their proper work, and in the midst of difficulties looking to God for his special blessing. Every reader will see the necessity that exists for the extension of this kind of agency, in every destitute part of England.

Labour and earnest Desire for Success.

"The Congregational Board of Education have promised £10, and we have obtained a master. I now regard the experiment as a successful one. The school is established. The chapel continues to be filled on Sunday nights.

"P——. The state of this part of my station remains as in times past. Everything is stereotyped here. Attendance, members, collections, subscriptions, &c., are so much alike, that the report of one month would need little altering to fit the same month in any year. Oh, for the fire from heaven to descend and melt the ill-set plate, and the Spirit's disposing power to re-cast the whole in a form of heavenly mould!

"S——, M——, K——, and E—— manifest symptoms of increasing desire to hear the word, more especially E——. Here I have been expecting to be compelled to give up the field to water regeneration and strong drink, through the death of the man in whose house I preached. I had been warned off his estate by one landowner, and expected the influence of the court would keep close every cottage. I have now a more convenient house offered me, in which I preached on the 19th, when, as this report will show, we had, for E——, an extraordinary congregation.

"W—— and W—— appear in this report, having, by late arrangements, become parts of my station; they are my extreme points, and are nearly thirteen miles asunder. These are taken up to fill the vacancy formed by abandoning Upper H—— and D——; each place will be supplied with a Lord's-day service, an arrangement I wish to make, had I instruments, for each of the eight places of which my station is at the present time composed.

"W—— I have more than once returned, as a place within eight miles, destitute of the Gospel. It is as large a place as P——. Though nowise prepossessing in its present appearance, it is, in many respects, the superior place of the two. Its ruined castle, once the abode of the line of York, is a fit emblem to set forth the moral and spiritual state of its inhabitants. The nettles that cover the ruins of the castle, and spread and luxuriate on the site of the banqueting-hall of the Mortimers, are not more rank than the Puseyism of the parish church."

Advantages, Direct and Indirect, of the Home Missionary Society.

"I do not know that I can better secure the object of the Directors in receiving a monthly journal from their missionaries, than by giving a few of those remarks I was led to make at our association meeting last week, which I now do very briefly.

"It is a painful thought that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen do not hear the Gospel, especially in such districts as those chosen by the Home Missionary Society for moral and spiritual cultivation. It requires little to show that the people need the Gospel in such places. They need it to open their eyes, renovate their hearts, and furnish them with those consolations they so much need in their

sorrows, privations, and poverty. On the stations which I occupy many there are who seldom attend a place of worship, and many others who do and yet never hear the Gospel. Instead of it they hear of morality, ritual religion, and much of baptismal regeneration, whilst conversion is scoffed at as impossible to those who have been regenerated by baptism. It is a solemn thought that multitudes are thus led in the dark, and are in the highway to death. When I think of these facts, I am more than ever impressed with the importance of the labours of the Home Missionary Society, and of the solemn position which its missionaries occupy. Every one sent out to publish the everlasting Gospel, and keep the great doctrines of justification by faith and sanctification by the Spirit of God before the minds of the people, is a light in the surrounding darkness—a breakwater to keep back the tide of error—a soldier of the cross, to fight the good fight of faith. The result of their labours, even indirectly, must be beyond the power of calculation. Were it not for such men, many a district would not only be left in darkness, but in a state of inactivity, perhaps something like a stagnant lake, over whose surface no wind blows to moderate its pestilential atmosphere. Missionary labours stimulate others to activity. On my station we have had two churches rebuilt, and one is in process of repair. Also one school has been built, and two others are building. I feel confident that much of the movement which this represents has originated in what has been done by the friends here for education, &c., during the last five years.

"I may mention an incident in connexion with the repairs of the church referred to, which will show what is done indirectly. Some nine months ago I sent a book on the voluntary principle to a wealthy gentleman in this neighbourhood, for which he thanked me, and said though he did not exactly see as the writer, he had derived considerable profit from its perusal. Now this very gentleman has subscribed his voluntary £300 for the repair of the church, which will prevent a rate being forced upon the parish! I think it is fair to infer that the work alluded to had some connexion with what he has done.

"But I take a still higher view of the labours of the Home Missionary Society in the direct results of missionary efforts. Not the least, I conceive, is in preparing the surplus population of the rural districts for entering the larger towns. Numbers have already gone, and numbers more must go. Shall they go steeped in ignorance and vice, or impregnated with error? or shall they go with their eyes opened, and their hearts renovated by the Spirit of God? This must depend, in many instances, upon the labours of the Home Missionary Society. I can look upon many who were once in our congregations, or in fellowship with us, who are now united with churches, to the east and the west, to the north and to the south, some of them diligently and usefully occupied in labours of love, whilst one is studying with a view to the Christian ministry in a distant part of the country. Among many things to discourage me, these have served to cheer me after seven years' toils; but one of my most pleasant reflections is to think of the fruit which has been gathered to eternal life. Whilst many a large church has had to deplore, amidst its numerous hearers, how few have been added to its fellowship when compared with what might be expected, the Home Missionary churches have not lacked the dews of the Divine blessing, though the congregations have been sometimes small and persecuted. This has been our case. God has set his seal to his own word in additions to the church; and in those instances in which he has called some away from us by death, we have had to rejoice in seeing the grace of God eminently displayed in them, and how those truths they have received have cheered them in the hour of death. May those that remain 'follow them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises!'"

Great Wickedness in the midst of Christian Activity.

"It is a prevailing opinion that this place is greatly improved from what it was,

and I fondly hope this is the case, and that our labours have been somewhat subservient to this end. But the belief of its improvement implies the awfully immoral state of the people in time past, and this indeed is verified on every hand. This place was proverbially and pre-eminently wicked for its population; it furnished more work for constables and gaolers than any other part of the county besides. Yet nothing like complacency may be felt with the present appearances of improvement, because of the still remaining aboundings of ungodliness; nothing is accomplished in comparison with what remains to be done.

"Let me attempt the ungracious task of particularising some of the awfully evil practices here prevailing. As one of the most shocking and most prevalent, I cannot but instance profane swearing. It is a frightful fact that great numbers, not only of the harder sex and of dissolute habits, are guilty in this thing, but females, ay, young and in appearance amiable females, are guilty; even young girls and children habitually utter and imprecate damnation on themselves and others. Of a great number collected together, it is acknowledged that, with but few exceptions, they all swear!

"Sabbath-breaking, again, is fearfully general. Shopping, baking, travelling is done on the Lord's-day, without scruple, by many, and by some of whom better things might be expected. Of the extent of the lewdness I cannot write more than to say, I should think that in this respect no place in the land is worse, and I hope that but few are half so bad.

"But of the drinking habits here I am constrained to bear a decidedly unfavourable testimony. They (many, very many) do drink, and will drink, whatever may be the consequences. These are appalling, and yet, notwithstanding, the infatuation continues, and to an enormous extent. We are indeed compelled to apprehend that very many are restrained, not by principle, but the want of means of indulging the fatal propensity; for little additional wages come into their hands, and the public-houses are abundantly thronged. All these things, and worse, in the nineteenth century in Christian England, and in a county ranking high in morals and in religious privileges! What inferences ought to be drawn from the foregoing? What beneficial results have followed the established means of religious instruction? What is the duty of the churches in reference to the neglected parts of the country? and how loud the call for much faithful labour and the wide and mighty outpourings of the Holy Spirit!"

Fearful Death.

"It will be seen by the list of services, that O—— receives more attention than formerly: this I have deemed necessary under present circumstances, and of which you are aware. I have established a members' meeting, which we hold fortnightly, and which we find highly beneficial in many respects. No other service has been declined in consequence, but I get a lay brother to supply my lack of service in another village for that evening.

"A most awful case has occurred in one of our villages during the present month. A man and his wife, living next door to our chapel at M——, had for a long time lived a most ungodly and unhappy life. On Wednesday, the 8th of October, the husband was beating one of their children, and the mother attempted to defend the child; this so infuriated the man that he seized a *piece of iron*, struck her several times most violently, and a dreadful affray ensued. After the uproar had somewhat subsided, the woman left the house and went to a neighbour's: here it is said that, while uttering some awful imprecations, she sank down paralysed and speechless. She was conveyed back to her home, and after lingering until the Monday following expired. It has caused an alarming sensation in the village, and I trust may be the means of checking some in their career of iniquity. Having announced that I

should make some remarks in connexion with the event on the following Sabbath evening, the chapel was crowded. I took for my text, Acts xiii. 41, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.' It was indeed a solemn season; and I most earnestly hope that many who have hitherto been despising the *threatenings*, the judgments, the mercy, and the grace of God, may be brought to repentance."

IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

OUR beloved brethren who have laboured as missionaries in heathen lands, have often sought to awaken the sympathies of British Christians by affecting descriptions of the superstitious practices observed by the people whom they have desired to turn from dumb idols to the living God. Perhaps it is impossible to point to any part of the globe where more absurd rites are practised than that described in the following extracts from a document recently received from one of the agents of the Society connected with the Connaught Mission. The description may be relied on, being from an eye-witness of the whole scene. It is published with the hope that its perusal will tend to awaken a greater concern, and excite a greater effort on behalf of our deluded fellow-subjects in that benighted portion of our empire. It is gratifying to the Committee to be able to report that this branch of the Society's efforts is exciting attention amongst the people, many of whom manifest a willingness to listen to the instructions afforded. But they regret that the opposition of others has displayed itself in a ferocious attack made on two of the Scripture-readers, who were beaten and stoned with extreme violence.

"This being what is called, in this country, 'Big Lady Day,' it is kept as a holy day by the Roman Catholics of Ireland; but in this part of the country it is noted for the 'stations' performed in it, at the celebrated well called Basle, pronounced Baal, about six Irish miles eastward from Castlebar. Having heard a great deal on this subject, but not having had an opportunity of being present, I was anxious to be an eye-witness of the whole routine. I therefore went to view the scene, accompanied by Mr. O'Connor. Some of our brethren, and other friends, were apprehensive lest the crowds assembled there would discover that we were Protestants, and perhaps murder us; but we were determined not to be deterred; so we set out, in the name of the Lord. Before I attempt to give an account of the station itself, it is necessary to give a brief description of the place.

"Baal is a very neat village; the principal part has been erected during the last ten or twelve years; and I think it owes a good deal of its prosperity to the course of people flocking to the well on or before the station days. It is surrounded by a fertile country: all nature seems smiling under the government of a beneficent Creator. But how painful to see man, with his immortal soul, so debased as not to know the Hand that made him—but performing the most degrading and disgusting rites, to please an imaginary deity—certainly not the God of the Bible!

"On our right, as we entered the town, is a chapel, connected with which is a burying-ground, which presents an appearance such as I had never seen before; the whole looks like a flagged floor. As there is a large freestone quarry convenient, each family has its own grave, covered with a large rough flag. In the graveyard is one of those round towers, for which Ireland is so famous. This tower is northward of the chapel. At a short distance north-east of it is an altar, on the top of which is a cut stone, about two feet square. On the stone is carved the figure of a cherub, and under it is cut, in large letters, 'The Queen of Heaven.' We now leave the graveyard, and pass through the west gate, which leads to a plot of ground, not now enclosed, though formerly a burying-ground. The length from the west gate to the famous well is about six or eight Irish perches. Just at the east

side of this well, and adjoining it, is a small unroofed house, in the east end of which is a door, and another in the west, out of which the pilgrims step into the well. Near to it are two monuments, about seven feet high, erected more than a century ago, over the graves of two respectable families. In the east side of these two monuments is fixed a cut stone, with the following inscriptions, which I give verbatim. The one towards the north I will call No. 1; the other, south and west to the well, No. 2.

No. 1.

"'Pray for FAr Laurence Lynch, the soul of John Lynch and Mary Brown, his wife. Richard oge* Lynch, and Eliza Lynch, his wife. Sub tuum procidium Confugimus, S Ta Dec. 1733, genetrix,' &c.

No. 2.

"'For the passion of Jesus Christ say one pater and one ave, for the soul of Father Charles Jordan.'—1733.

"This brief description of the place is necessary, in order to understand the following account of the 'stations.' The station commences in the graveyard: the pilgrims begin on the south-east side of the tower, and take nearly a circular course round it and the altar, north-east of it; the whole circumference is about ninety yards; this they walk round seven times, repeating seven paters and seven aves. When this is fulfilled, they go on their bare knees, on a place covered with coarse gravel. They move along slowly on their knees, now upon rough gravel, and now again upon rough flags, according as they happen to be in the way. In a short time, the pain in their knees becomes so excruciating that many of the pilgrims must stoop on their hands, in order to relieve their knees a little, and then crawl the remainder of the way in this posture. They move along, evidently in great pain, until they reach the altar, which I have described above. In many cases, the flesh becomes so lacerated that the bone may be seen. The whole length they go on their knees in the graveyard is about sixty yards. When the pilgrims arrive at this altar, they repeat seven paters and seven aves, and then kiss the 'Queen of Heaven' three times. This closes the station in the graveyard. The principal part of the pilgrims then rise from their knees, and walk down to the two monuments already mentioned. Here they kneel opposite to the cut stones No. 1, and No. 2, and repeat seven paters and seven aves, then rise up, and walk round the two monuments seven times, repeating prayers: as they go along each time, they bow to the cut stone No. 1. After going round seven times, they take a small stone, cut for that purpose, and cut a cross on the stone No. 1, four times, and then kiss it the same number of times with the greatest veneration. When all this is performed, they go to the unroofed house at the well. The floor of this is also covered with gravel: they enter this through the door at the west side, move along on their bare knees, repeating prayers, till they reach the opposite door, from which they step into the well. The well is about two and a half to three feet deep. Men and women step promiscuously into it, turn round in it seven times, say seven paters and seven aves, throw some water on their head,—and thus this painful ceremony ceases.

"Although a reader may think this station superstitious and painful enough, yet there is another performed by some far more so. The pilgrims who perform this station, when they reach the altar in the graveyard, instead of rising from their knees like the others, walk on their knees to the well-gate, and from that to the two monuments, go round them on their knees seven times, move to the unroofed house,

* Oge is an Irish word for young.

and through it to the well. The first pilgrim that attracted my attention was a man, who, after going through all I have described, on his knees, was just going into the unroofed house, but his strength was so exhausted, and his knees so lacerated, that he had to get two sticks, one in each hand, on which to lean, that he might be able to get through the whole. I believe if they fail through fatigue and pain, they can taste nothing until the station is performed. Some of these pilgrims are a long time before they recover their strength.

"The above is but a very faint description of the ceremonies performed, and the sufferings endured. No writer could paint them in all their horrors. Think for a moment of men and women, young and old, from the boy or girl of twenty to the man or woman of sixty years or more, travelling on foot, perhaps sixty miles, for the purpose of torturing themselves, by crawling on their hands and knees, over sharp gravel and rough flags, until, in many cases, the blood drops from their mangled flesh. All this, in many cases, is to make an atonement for some horrid crime perpetrated, or to get the soul of a friend released from the pains of purgatory, or to thank the 'Queen of Heaven' for restoring a husband or child to health. May it not justly be said of poor Ireland, that darkness covereth the land, and gross darkness the minds of the people? May a gracious God soon say, 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!' Hasten the time, O Lord God of salvation!"

COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Death of the Rev. Moses Parker, late Missionary in Van Diemen's Land.

THE following letter from the Rev. Wm. Jarrett, secretary to the Van Diemen's Land Colonial Missionary and Christian Instruction Society, conveying intelligence of this mournful event, requires no comment. Mr. Parker, during his short term of service, seems to have manifested very valuable qualifications for his peculiar and difficult sphere of labour among the convicts and settlers thinly scattered over a wide tract in the interior of Van Diemen's Land. His loss will be severely felt. Christian sympathy must be excited in behalf of his widow and fatherless children, in the far land of their sojourn. If it should dispose any friend to communicate for their assistance, the Rev. A. Wells will be happy to transmit any sums that may be confided to him at the Congregational Library.

"Hobart Town, May 26, 1845.

"My dear Sir,—A few weeks since, I wrote to state to you the grounds upon which we had come to the conclusion that Mr. Parker was fit to fill the office of missionary, vacant by the removal of Mr. Morison to Port Phillip. It is my painful duty now to inform you of his death. He had proceeded to the Huou River, a distance of twenty-five miles from Hobart Town and forty from Richmond, where he was attacked with dysentery. Some days elapsed before we could be informed of the circumstance, and several more before he could be removed to town; and at the expiration of a fortnight from the first attack of his disease he died. It was my privilege to be present when he breathed his last. I say privilege, because I was permitted to witness in his case a striking illustration of the power of the Gospel to afford peace and comfort in the hour of death.

"The impression of the committee respecting his suitableness, as recorded in my last communication, has been strongly confirmed since his death. Very many

instances of the usefulness of his ministry have been brought to our knowledge, and most convincing evidence presented that he laboured throughout his short but useful career with a single eye to the Redeemer's glory. We feel our loss to be indeed great, and at present quite irreparable. You will, I am sure, unite with us in the prayer, that the Lord of the harvest will be pleased to provide a suitable successor to our brother who has entered on his rest.

"Our deceased brother has left a widow and five children, who are destitute of the means of support. Feeling that the widow and fatherless have a strong claim upon our sympathy, we have opened a public subscription on their behalf. All that we can do, however, will be quite inadequate; may we therefore look to you, kindly to use your interest to obtain from the widows' fund in connexion with the *Evangelical Magazine*, an allowance in aid of the distressed family of our deceased brother, and any further aid you may be able to obtain?

"The committee trust that you will allow them to draw, as heretofore, in favour of any agent they may deem qualified to supply the office of the late Mr. Parker. The committee deeply feel the importance of fixing a high standard of qualification. They feel, moreover, that it would be better that the office should not be filled, than filled unsuitably. We have resolved to wait two months before taking any steps to appoint a successor to our departed brother, and in the mean time to supply his stations in the best manner we can. So much embarrassment would be caused to the committee, if not permitted to draw, in the event of the appearance of a suitable person to fill the vacant office, that we trust your committee will exercise a generous confidence in our judgment and integrity, and concede to us the favour we ask. I remain, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

WM. JARRETT,

"Joint Secretary of the Van Diemen's Land Colonial Missionary and Christian Instruction Society."

To the Rev. A. Wells, Secretary.

TRANSACTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

MEETINGS FOR SPECIAL PRAYER.

At the monthly meeting of the Congregational Board of London, held at the Library, Tuesday, Nov. 11, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That the members of this Board, having heard the minute and resolutions of the Congregational Union at its autumnal meeting, recently held at Manchester on the present state of religion in our churches, and on the need of united and earnest prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and for the increase of love, zeal, and union amongst all the people of God, agree to recommend to our churches the observance of the first week of December for conference and prayer, either associated or apart, as may be found convenient."

ENDOWMENT OF AIREDALE COLLEGE.—With feelings of unfeigned satisfaction we record another, and we may denominate it the crowning, proof of the generous concern and bounty of Mrs. Bacon, of this town, in behalf of the above important institution, of which, in connexion with her late pious sister, Miss Sarah Balme, she may be regarded and honoured as the foundress.

These excellent ladies gave the estate at Undercliffe, upon which the present college is erected, and another estate at Fagley, from which an average rental of more than £80 per annum is derived, for its perpetual maintenance. Besides her annual

subscription, Mrs. Bacon has contributed various donations towards the same object; and now has added to all her other favours the munificent gift of eight thousand pounds, vested in the 3 per cent. consols, in the names of the Rev. Thomas Scales, Leeds, Robert Milligan, Esq., Acacia, Rawden, Henry Forbes, Esq., Summerhill House, Rawden, and George Osborn, Esq., Bradford; the interest of which is to be expended in the education of the students who shall be resident in Airedale College, to prepare for the exercise of the Christian ministry amongst the Congregational or Independent churches of this land.

This noble gift, devoted to the service of God and his truth, in a spirit as unostentatious and humble as it was benevolent and generous, was announced to the gentlemen of the committee, at their meeting on Monday last, by Mrs. Bacon's solicitor, Mr. Bentley; and whilst the communication took many of them by a most agreeable surprise, it awakened in the breasts of all deep-felt gratitude to the generous donor, and to God, the source of all goodness and mercy, who had given her not only the means, but the pious disposition, thus to aid the sacred cause, and to promote the combined interests of religion and learning.

The following resolution, on the motion of the Rev. T. Scales, seconded by John Peel Clapham, Esq., was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be forwarded by the secretary to Mrs. Bacon:—

"That the cordial and most grateful thanks of the Committee be presented to Mrs. Bacon, for all the past kindness she has shown to this institution, and especially for her munificent gift of £8,000 secured in the public funds, towards the future maintenance of this College, in the education of the resident students; that while this Committee would record its gratitude to God, who has put it into the heart of their kind benefactress thus generously to aid his cause, they trust that at the same time it will act as a powerful stimulus to all connected with the institution, to exert themselves for the removal of the existing debt, and the permanent and liberal support of this important college. The Committee pray that the life of their generous friend may be prolonged to witness the prosperity of an institution to which she has manifested so much kindness; and in presenting their acknowledgments, they would respectfully and earnestly request that Mrs. Bacon would overcome the reluctance which they are aware she has expressed, to sit for her portrait, that so valuable a memento of one to whom they are so much indebted, may be preserved in the library of the institution."

Besides the several donations we have enumerated, Mrs. Bacon gave the sum of £1,500 towards the erection of the College chapel, where the Rev. Walter Scott, the principal of the college, exercises his ministry; and still more recently, the sum of £500 for the erection of the day-schools in connexion with the same chapel, which were opened only last evening.—*Bradford Observer*.

OPENING OF COLLEGE CHAPEL DAY SCHOOL, AIREDALE.—This spacious and commodious educational establishment was opened on Wednesday evening, Sept. 3rd, by a public meeting in the school-room. The building is situated on a commanding and airy spot at the junction of the Eccles-hill and Idle-road with High-street. It has a fine and rather picturesque appearance: there is enough of the Gothic about its architectural arrangements, to give it an air of massive strength; while this again is relieved and lightened by the symmetrical beauty of the entire building. It consists of only one story, although the school-room may be said to be on the second floor. The ground floor is a covered play-ground, connected with an open play-ground of more than 2,000 square yards in extent. Behind the covered play-ground is a range of cloisters, consisting of washing-rooms, &c.; and, as we have said, above all, supported by strong pillars and arches, is the large school-room. It is ninety-four feet in length, inside the walls, and thirty-six feet in width. It is

divided into two compartments by shutters, which can easily be raised or lowered. The intention of this division is to separate the boys from the girls, while each are engaged in their distinctive lessons. The school is in connexion with College Chapel, and is under the pastoral superintendence of the Rev. Walter Scott, of Aire-dale College, and will be managed by a committee of gentlemen connected with that church and congregation. The school has cost from £1,700 to £1,800; a sum which certainly warranted the meeting to pass a resolution to the effect, that "thanks are due to all who have kindly and liberally contributed to the erection of the building, especially to Robert Milligan, Esq., for the deep interest which he has manifested in its success." By the liberality of the friends of this institution, the teachers, Mr. Dick and Miss Davidson, have been provided with a most efficient educational apparatus. Every disposable part of the walls was covered with fine coloured maps, and pictures of the animal creation. The liberal and unsectarian principles of the British and Foreign School Society, are the principles upon which the school will be conducted. But though sectarianism will be excluded, particular attention will be paid to the moral and religious education of the children. Robert Milligan, Esq., presided at the meeting. The proceedings were opened by singing a hymn; after which the Rev. Walter Scott offered a prayer for a blessing upon the good work about to be commenced in the place. A series of resolutions were then moved and seconded by the following gentlemen:—Rev. J. Acworth, of Horton College; Rev. J. Savage, of Wilsden; E. Baines, Jun., Esq.; Rev. Walter Scott, of Aire-dale College; James Garnett, Esq.; John Rawson, Esq.; Henry Forbes, Esq.; Rev. D. Fraser, of Airedale College; Rev. J. Paul, Wibsey. The school-room was well filled with a respectable and attentive audience.

NEW CHAPELS.

FOUNDATION OF A NEW CHAPEL AT HOLLOWAY, BY ISLINGTON, LONDON.—

We are happy to report that on Friday, August 22, an interesting service took place in connexion with the Congregational church assembling at Holloway. At twelve o'clock a congregation assembled in the present chapel, when the Rev. J. Blackburn prayed, and the Rev. A. J. Morris, the pastor, delivered an ingenious and impressive address on the views and intentions of the people in proposing to erect a new house of prayer. The company then adjourned to a plot of ground near the Chalk-road, when G. Brooke, Esq., laid the foundation-stone—Dr. Leifchild delivered a comprehensive address on the principles of the Congregational churches, and the Rev. J. Yockney closed the service with prayer. In the evening, a large company assembled to tea in a spacious tent in an adjacent paddock, and were addressed by Dr. Leifchild, and most of the ministers in the neighbourhood. The new edifice will be of stone, in the English style, and will probably cost about £3000. The site is well chosen amidst a new and important neighbourhood rising around it.

ADELPHI CHAPEL, HACKNEY ROAD.—The opening of this elegant place of worship took place on Wednesday, the 17th September. The interesting services of the day commenced by an early meeting to implore the Divine blessing upon the ministry of the word within the walls of this sacred edifice. In the morning, the Rev. A. Reed, D.D. preached an appropriate sermon from Matthew x. 8, "Freely ye have received, freely give." In the evening, the Rev. James Sherman delivered an animated discourse from Ephesians iii. 8, "The unsearchable riches of Christ." The devotional parts of the services were conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Woodhouse, Wilsdon, Ferguson (Free Scotch Church,) Dukes, Wilkins, Hyatt, Seaborne, and Viney. Most of the other neighbouring ministers were present, including the Rev. Drs. Campbell, Collison, Cox, Hewlett, and Styles, and the Rev. Messrs. Carlile, Clarke, Hollis, Hitchin, Ham, Harrison, Jeula, Lyon, Philip, Pulling, Ransom,

Smith, Verrall, Wood, Woodman, and several students from Cheshunt and Hackney Colleges. Notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, the services were numerous and respectfully attended, and in the evening the chapel was so crowded that great numbers were wholly unable to gain admittance. The design of the chapel is very chaste and ornamental, of the Corinthian order, and reflects great credit on the taste displayed by the architect, Mr. T. G. Owen, of Maidenhead, Berks. After the morning service, the friends adjourned to the school-rooms in Wilmot Square, kindly granted for the occasion by R. Gamman, Esq., where a cold collation was provided by the committee. In the absence of Mr. Alderman Challis, (one of the trustees, who had engaged to preside,) the Rev. Dr. Reed occupied the chair, supported by many highly respectable ministers of different denominations. Several interesting addresses were delivered, manifesting the kindest feelings of sympathy towards this new interest and its minister. A satisfactory statement was made respecting the circumstances which led to the erection of this commodious chapel, so far superior to the former one, from which it appears that the fund at the disposal of the trustees, (after paying the mortgage, and other claims upon the old chapel,) has been exceeded about £800. The friends kindly responded to the appeals on behalf of its liquidation, and during the day the sum of more than £120 was raised. The deep and lively interest excited in the neighbourhood, and the kind feeling and encouraging attendance at the opening, indicate that a promising sphere of usefulness has been selected, and furnish a prospect of the most cheering character. On the Sabbath following, the Rev. Dr. Jenkyn preached in the morning, and the Rev. W. Woodhouse in the evening, to overflowing congregations.

ALBION CHAPEL, SOUTHAMPTON.—On Wednesday, the 17th of September, the anniversary of the opening of Albion Chapel, St. Mary's Street, was celebrated by a public tea meeting, when nearly five hundred individuals were admitted by ticket. After tea the chapel was thrown open to the public, and it was soon filled to overflowing by a most respectable audience. W. Tice, Esq., of Sopley, having taken the chair, the Rev. Thomas Pullar, the newly-elected minister of the place, gave out a suitable hymn, and the Rev. Thomas Morris, Baptist minister, engaged in prayer. After the opening address by the chairman, Mr. Fletcher, the senior deacon, read a most interesting report of the rise and progress of the church and congregation to the present time. Mr. W. Lankester, the treasurer, read the financial statement, from which it appeared that £1562. 7s. 11d. had been expended in the purchase of the freehold premises, the alterations necessary for converting them into a place of worship, and the building of a school-room and convenient library and vestry,—that £1266. 0s. 3d. had been collected during the past year, leaving a balance of £296. 7s. 8d. to be liquidated. The treasurer stated that the Committee trusted they should not leave the meeting until they had declared the place out of debt. After most spirit-stirring addresses from the Rev. J. H. Adams, Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Daniel Gunn, of Christchurch, the Rev. W. Thorn, of Winchester, and the Rev. John Burnet, of Camberwell, a collection was made, and the treasurer announced the amount to be £269. 10s. 10d., leaving a balance of £26 to be raised to pay off the debt. Mr. Fletcher proposed that twenty-six persons holding up their hands for £1 each would raise the money; this was immediately responded to, and the treasurer announced their best wishes realised, and declared the debt extinguished; thus clearing the way for the erection of a handsome and commodious place of worship, with school-rooms, as originally contemplated by the Committee when the temporary building now used was first opened. Thanks were then moved and seconded by the Rev. J. Lumb and Mr. Fletcher, to the weekly collectors, by whom more than £200 had been raised since the commencement of the effort to open this place of worship, and also to the chairman, by the Rev. Mr. Pullar and

Mr. Stace. The doxology was then sung, and the meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. J. Crabb. This was altogether one of the most effective meetings ever held in Southampton; and presents a striking proof of what may be accomplished by the united and energetic efforts of a few individuals who determine zealously to promote the spiritual welfare of their fellow-townsmen. On the following morning a breakfast was given in the chapel by the Building Committee, to the ministers who assisted in the anniversary service. The Rev. Thomas Pullar took the chair; and the meeting was addressed by the Rev. Messrs. Burnet, Gunn, Morris, and Adams, on the gratifying prospects of the church, and on the best mode of diffusing the principles of nonconformity in the present remarkable times.

The ST. PAUL'S INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, in the town of Wigan, which had become much dilapidated, has undergone an entire renovation, and has been recently re-opened. The services extended over three Sabbaths and three week-nights. The preachers were the Revs. G. Clayton, Dr. Bennett, Dr. Davidson, Dr. Raffles, Walter Scott, and J. A. James, with an introductory address at a special prayer-meeting, by the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham. Hymns newly composed for the occasion, by J. Montgomery, Esq. All the services were of a deeply interesting character. At the close of the last one, the Rev. W. Roaf, the pastor, ascended the pulpit, and announced, that the collections, including a few private donations, amounted to upwards of eight hundred pounds, being fully sufficient to cover the expenditure. He expressed the thanks of the trustees with the joy of his own heart, and requested the large assembly to rise and sing the doxology. The Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, then gave to him the right hand of fellowship, congratulating him on having such a people, and them on having such a minister. On the following Sabbath, the Rev. W. Roaf delivered a sermon, which a domestic bereavement prevented him from delivering during the re-opening services, on the words "Ebenezer," &c., in which he took a review of the history of the congregation, with the names, dates, and characters of its pastors, from about the year 1773, and enjoined the truths suited to its present auspicious circumstances.

ORDINATION.

On Tuesday, the 26th of August, 1845, the Rev. James Fleming, late of Highbury College, London, was solemnly ordained as pastor of the church and congregation, assembling in High-street Chapel, Lancaster. The Rev. E. Jukes, of Blackburn, commenced the morning service, by reading suitable portions of Scripture, and offering prayer; the Rev. R. Halley, D.D., of Manchester, delivered a masterly discourse in defence of Congregational principles, and of the ordination service, as observed among the Independents; the Rev. A. Fraser, M.A., of Blackburn, asked the usual questions; the Rev. R. Vaughan, D.D., President of the Lancashire Independent College, offered the ordination prayer; and the Rev. T. Raffles, D.D., LL.D., of Liverpool, gave an impressive charge to the minister. In the evening the Rev. G. Clayton, of Walworth, London, delivered a faithful address to the people. The devotional parts of the day's services were conducted by the Revs. F. Evans, of Ulverston; R. Wilson, of Cockermouth; J. Gregory, of Thornton, Yorkshire; W. G. Nevatt, of Forton; G. Hoyle, of Manchester; and R. M. Griffiths, of Kirkham. The day was one of hallowed enjoyment; and the newly-ordained pastor has entered on his labours in this important sphere, with prospects of very extensive usefulness. On the evening previous to the day of ordination, Mr. Fleming received from the young people of the congregation a copy of Bagster's Comprehensive Bible, handsomely bound in morocco, and hymn-books corresponding therewith, for the pulpit.

THE EDITOR'S FAREWELL.

As there is "a time to be born and a time to die," so it is the unalterable decree of Heaven, that there must be, ere long, an end of all the labours which every "man taketh under the sun." It is, therefore, expedient and salutary, sometimes to anticipate the final close of the busy occupations of earth, and voluntarily to retire from at least some of those constantly recurring engagements which absorb one's time, crowd upon one's thoughts, and slowly, but surely, enfeeble one's bodily and mental powers. The duty of this course is rendered more plain, and the task more easy, when it is known that the post we are about to vacate will be occupied by more efficient and successful labourers.

When I was called, in the providence of God, now twenty years ago, to share with my much-loved and lamented friends, the Rev. Joseph Fletcher and the Rev. William Orme, in the management of this journal, I anticipated that, with their co-operation, the duties of a joint editorship would not be onerous, whilst I knew that to be associated with them would be both pleasant and honourable. The variable health of the former, and the early and lamented departure of the latter, unexpectedly devolved the whole burden of the work upon me; and though I obtained the temporary aid of some gentlemen whose names and contributions shed a lustre upon its pages, yet the Magazine did not receive that patronage from the Independent denomination we had a right to expect, and there was but one of two courses left to me,—either to sustain it as I could, or to suffer it to expire. Deeply impressed with its importance to our interests, I struggled on, from month to month, sometimes cheered by the voluntary and able literary assistance gratuitously afforded me, and often depressed by the short-sighted policy of those who could starve by neglect the most likely means of advancing our denominational prosperity.

The stern necessity which thus held me for many a long year a reluctant occupant of the editorial chair, has now happily passed away. The one Head of his church has been pleased to raise up in our body a goodly band of able and erudite ministers, some of whom have undertaken to relieve me of my burden. Their literary habits, varied resources, and comparative leisure, will no doubt make duties that have oppressed me, facile to them, and attractive to the public. I therefore now most gladly vacate my editorial office, cheered by the hope

that the objects for which I have so long laboured will be far better served by my highly esteemed brethren and friends who will succeed me.

Before this valedictory address is closed, I trust it will be permitted me to look back upon the history of this periodical, and, in words that I have previously used, to recall some of the objects which its establishment and maintenance have subserved and effected.

The retrospect of twenty-eight years that have passed away since its first publication, recalls many important victories gained in the cause of religious liberty, and many an onward step in the progress of the Congregational body. The abolition of the Sacramental Test, and the consequent admission of dissenting gentlemen to municipal and magisterial honours—the establishment of the University of London, and the connexion of our new or greatly improved colleges with that learned body—the parliamentary enactment of a system of national registration altogether independent of ecclesiastical rites—the resistance to church rates, church extension, and church education, at the charge of the whole community; these are some of the advantages that have been won from class ascendancy and religious intolerance. And those who have read this Journal during that long and stirring period know, and those who may look through the whole series of its volumes will find, that those principles and arguments, those statistical facts and calculations, which have formed the basis of these movements, have been published in its pages, and have often been found in its pages alone.

It has also pleaded for and subserved every object of denominational interest and importance. The establishment of the Congregational Library and the Congregational Lecture was first proposed in this Journal, and to its zealous and persevering advocacy the existence of the CONGREGATIONAL UNION is mainly attributable. Our pages prepared the way for its formation, hailed its birth, fostered it into prosperity, and continued to report its progress and register its transactions, at greater length than could be found elsewhere, until that body deemed it to be expedient to sanction the establishment of another Journal.

But there are higher subjects of congratulation still; the revival of religion amongst ministers and people has been explained and commended—steadfastness in the faith once delivered to the saints has been advocated and urged—the work of the Holy Spirit has been asserted and maintained—and increased seriousness and spirituality in the public worship of God has been recommended and enforced—and

union and brotherly love amongst all true Christians have been cherished. These have been the chief characteristics of the CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE, and I hope and pray will continue to be, while it bears the name of those churches to whom these opinions are most precious.

These objects, I trust, have been generally advocated in the spirit of the Gospel. When we entered upon the second year of our labours it was stated, that "though the editors could pledge themselves to no measures which would prevent a temperate avowal of their convictions, they are anxious to remember the admirable sentiment of Hooker, That 'three words uttered with charity and meekness will receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written *with the disdainful sharpness of wit.*' "

In seeking to fulfil this promise, I have been compelled to dissent from certain lines of action pursued by a section of our body; and for my efforts to abate the asperities of party conflict I have been exposed to no small reproach both in public and private. Indeed, there are not wanting amongst us some who are so deficient in good taste and good feeling as publicly to exult in the anticipated demise of this old and faithful servant of the denomination. I can assure those gentlemen that they greatly err, if they suppose that this advocate of Christian forbearance, unity, and love, is about to expire. My honoured successors will satisfactorily sustain it: they are too learned to be sectarian, and too Christian to be bitter and uncharitable; and will, I am confident, use their best influence at once to advance Christian union amongst all the Evangelical brotherhood, and to maintain with suavity and firmness our own distinctive principles.

I cannot close this address, however, without returning my personal thanks to that able band of contributors who have, at great sacrifices of time and labour, generously assisted me in my work, and by whose unbought services our readers and the public have been so often instructed and refreshed.

For them, and for the new Editors of THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE AND BIBLICAL REVIEW, I would implore the blessing of our covenant God, and throwing aside the editorial vizard and the oracular "We," I descend from the chair of the censor, and from my private station subscribe myself their grateful and still devoted friend and brother,

Islington, Nov. 28, 1845.

JOHN BLACKBURN.

